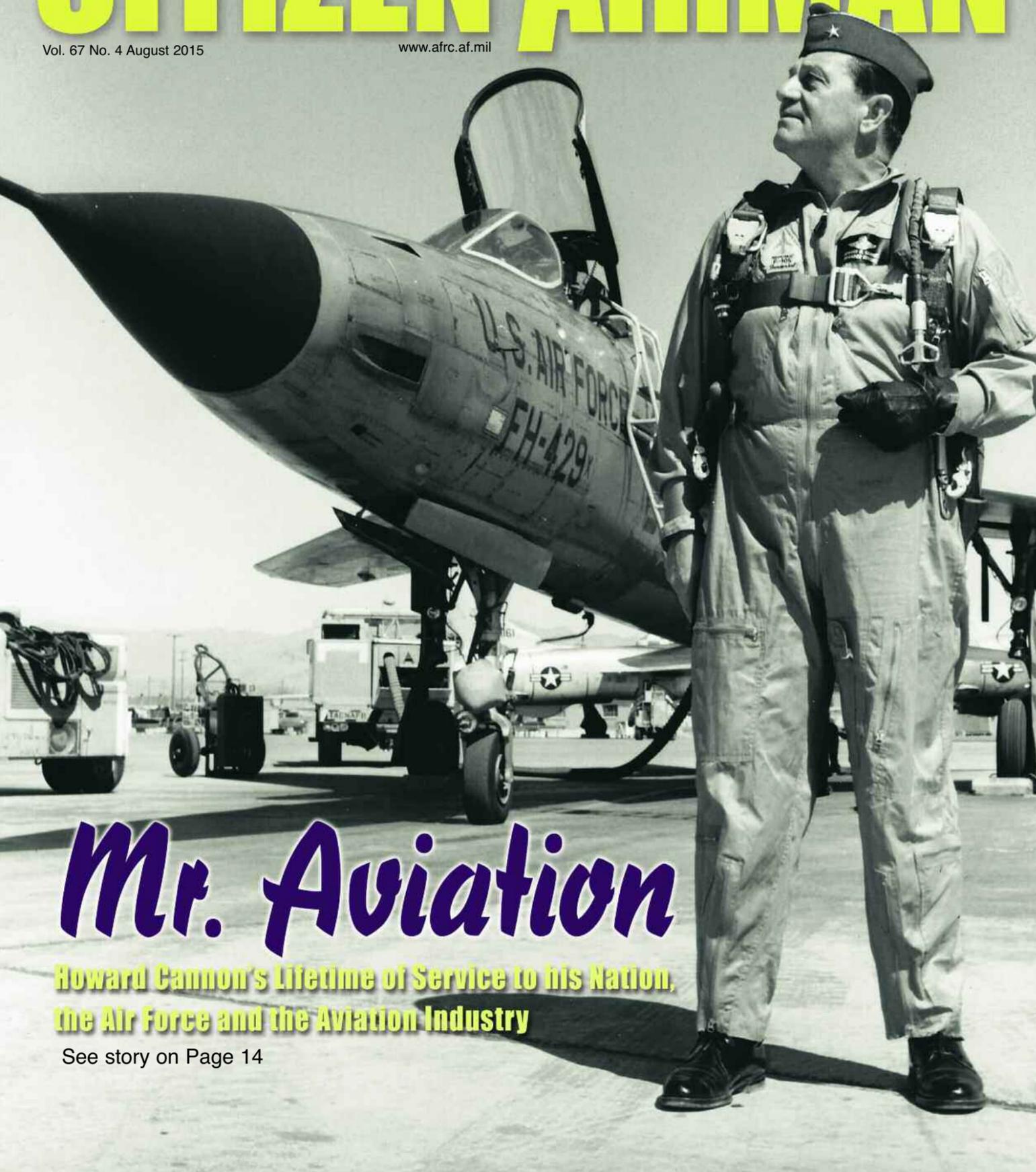


Official Magazine of the Air Force Reserve

# CITIZEN AIRMAN

Vol. 67 No. 4 August 2015

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## Mr. Aviation

**Howard Cannon's Lifetime of Service to his Nation,  
the Air Force and the Aviation Industry**

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



THE STRATEGIC MASTER PLAN AND THE AFR

In May, the secretary of the Air Force and the chief of staff of the Air Force published their Strategic Master Plan. It is the latest in a series of documents the Air Force has released explaining who we are and what we need to do to remain the best Air Force in the world.

The Strategic Master Plan is designed to help planners integrate their efforts and work toward a common goal. The synergy achieved by using this guidance is critical for the rapidly changing future we expect to face, and it will also allow us to continue to succeed in our current resource-constrained environment.

Our Air Force Reserve is postured to play a key role in the future of our Air Force as defined in the Strategic Master Plan. The plan defines 12 strategic goals and clearly outlines how we need to prepare ourselves to deliver the capabilities combatant commanders will need in the future.

Secretary of the Air Force Deborah Lee James recently stated, "Tomorrow's Air Force has to be the most agile, credible and affordable total force team capable of meeting what our combatant commanders need." It is this call for a total force team that I want to focus on.

Our nation will continue to capitalize on the strength of

our Air Force Reserve. Our Citizen Airmen remain critical for performing day-to-day operations and meeting unexpected threats. In fact, the Strategic Master Plan states we are not simply a strategic reserve that augments our active-duty counterparts but rather a fully engaged and integrated total force team. This is exactly how I believe our Citizen Airmen are most valuable.

I still talk about our strength in terms of operational capability, strategic depth and surge capacity. Our ability to provide forces to combatant commanders for day-to-day operations and in surge situations is essential. The Strategic Master Plan encourages planners to leverage these AFR strengths. Only by doing this will we have the ability to meet national security demands.

As we move forward, we will continue to look for ways to grow our Reserve force in order to achieve the strategic goals set forth in this year's Strategic Master Plan. We will also continue to prioritize mission areas where the Air Force Reserve can leverage our civilian experience and provide cost-effective manning. Mission areas that allow us to fill critical capacity gaps such as deterrence, flexible intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, and space and cyber

operations are perfect opportunities for us to grow our force and meet the demands of global security. Our continued focus will also ensure we are ready to meet the demands of the future and build on the lessons of the past.

Our Air Force is only as strong as our Airmen and will only remain relevant if we continue to find innovative solutions to meet future threats. Your dedication and commitment make it possible for us to answer our nation's call as one of the three strong Air Force components. I appreciate your hard work and continued service to this nation. Thanks for all you do!

CHIEF MASTER SERGEANT  
*Cameron B. Kirksey*  
 CHIEF'S VIEW

CONNECT — RELATE — CARE

This month I want to talk about connections again. As you know, one of my focus areas is team wellness, which includes taking care of our Airmen and their families. Making connections is the essential first step in creating a strong team environment.

As General Jackson explains, we need to connect on a peer-to-peer level, a supervisor-to-subordinate level and with our families. When we connect, relate and care, we create a culture where the wellness of our Airmen and their families is our top priority.

Team wellness starts with connections, but you should also think about what you can do to relate and care for

those around you. When we relate to others, it means we truly understand the things they are going through. Being aware of the trials and challenges others face allows us to provide guidance, support and help when members of our team are experiencing a tough time. The only way to understand these challenges is to take the time to get to know your fellow Airmen.

During my unit visits, I enjoy spending time with our Airmen. As Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Welsh III says, every Airman has a story, and it is important for me to hear these stories. Understanding the challenges Airmen experience in the field allows me to relate to what they are going through on a day-to-day basis.

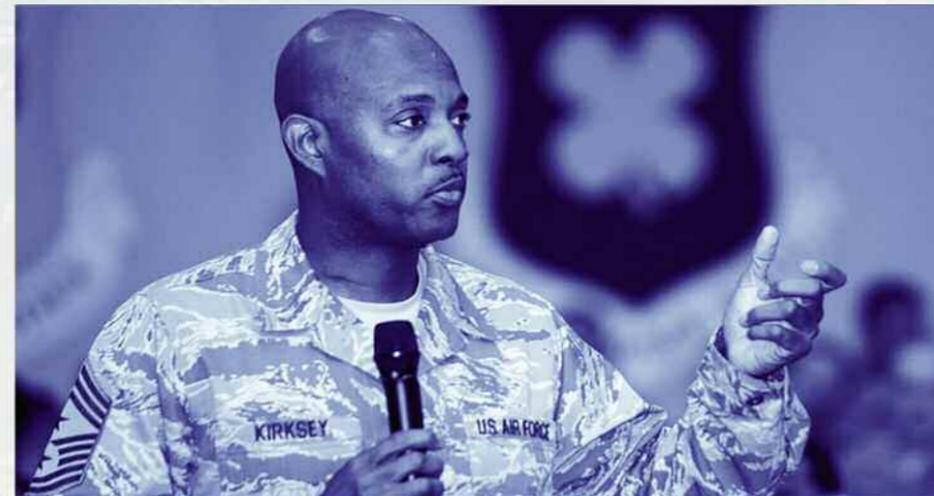
Unit visits provide me the opportunity to connect with our Airmen on an individual level and to better advocate for our entire force. In the future, I plan on spending even more time shadowing our Airmen during unit visits. When you are looking for ways to relate to others, take the time to understand their work environment and the challenges they may face.

It is also important to relate to each other on a personal level outside of work, particularly when we are talking about our families. I encourage you to find common hobbies you can share and discuss with your co-workers. This will lead to stronger connections and allow you to be a better wingman. For

the families, look for opportunities to get connected. Check out the Key Spouse Program and Yellow Ribbon events, which provide a great way to meet other Air Force Reserve families.

Remember that you and your families are our most important asset. When we connect, relate and care, we create a bond within our organization that helps us face the challenges in our lives.

I challenge each of you to focus on ways to create a stronger team focused on the wellness of each other and your families. Remember, I'm here for you!



# CITIZEN AIRMAN

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**Operation ReConnect: Nonprofit seeks to match military families with property owners to provide free vacations**

On the cover: After serving in the Army Air Force during World War II, Howard Cannon joined the Air Force Reserve, where he rose to the rank of major general. Cannon also had a long and distinguished career as a member of the U.S. Senate, where he was a major advocate for air power and aviation. Read more about Cannon's life and career in this issue's Profiles in Leadership story on Page 14.

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

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

**Col. Robert P. Palmer** *Director of Public Affairs, Air Force Reserve Command*

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**Staff Sgt. Brittainy Ward, 940th Wing senior emergency action controller and reports manager, operates the Giant Voice System at Beale Air Force Base, California. Giant Voice is a tool that helps the Beale Command Post quickly route potentially life-saving notifications base-wide. (Staff Sgt. Brenda Davis)**



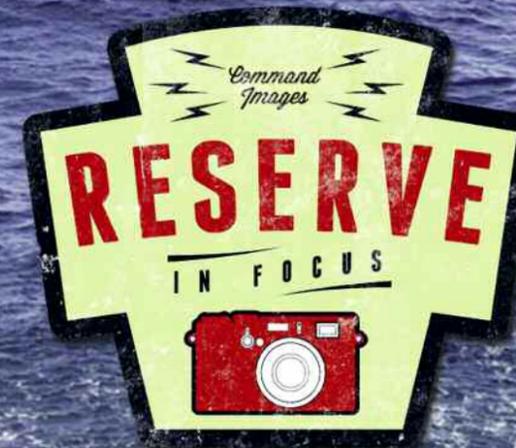
Senior Master Sgt. Eric Jones, 94th Logistics Readiness Squadron, carries a masonry brick down a hill during the Georgia Spring 2015 Savage Race in Dallas, Georgia. The Savage Race is an Air Force Reserve-sponsored obstacle course that challenges participants in more than 20 different trials over the course of five miles. (Senior Airman Daniel Phelps)

A firefighter assigned to the 315th Civil Engineer Squadron conducts fire prevention training at Joint Base Charleston, South Carolina. The training tested participants' response time and ability to rescue aircraft crew members in the event of an emergency. (Senior Airman Tom Brading)



Airman Mario Hill, 919th Special Operations Maintenance Group, shines a flashlight into an engine intake to perform routine maintenance on a C-145 Skytruck at Duke Field, Florida. (Tech. Sgt. Jasmin Taylor)

An HH-60 Pave Hawk helicopter from the 305th Rescue Squadron, Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, hovers over a pararescue jumper in the Pacific Ocean near Oregon's northern coast. The 305th RQS conducted water rescue training with PJs and combat rescue officers from the 304th RQS stationed at Portland Air National Guard Base, Oregon. (2nd Lt. Anna-Marie Wyant)





**Maj. Julie Sherman (left) and Senior Airman Brandon Trauba of the 934th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron look through their Airman's Manual for information during a chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and explosives challenge. Members of the squadron brushed up on skills and competed in challenges during a block training session April 30 and May 1 at Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport Air Reserve Station, Minnesota. (Shannon McKay)**



**Staff Sgt. Heather Haltli, a crew chief in the 419th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron at Hill Air Force Base, Utah, double-checks an F-16 Fighting Falcon before it takes off to participate in Exercise Emerald Warrior at Eglin Air Force Base, Florida. Reservists from the 419th spent two weeks of annual training at Eglin honing the skills they will use when tasked to deploy. (Staff Sgt. Crystal Charriere)**



**Master Sgt. Leanna Jack looks on as a C-5M Super Galaxy connects with a KC-10 Extender for aerial refueling over San Francisco. Jack was one of more than 15 Air Force Reservists assigned to the 349th Air Mobility Wing at Travis Air Force Base, California, who took part in an orientation flight. (2nd Lt. Stephen J. Collier)**

**Senior Airman Jake Chanay, 349th Security Forces Squadron, sets up security with his M249 squad automatic weapon during a dismounted patrol at Travis Air Force Base, California. More than 40 defenders took part in various expeditionary combat skills training scenarios during an Air Force specialty code training weekend. (Staff Sgt. Christopher Carranza)**



## Former Reserve Senior Enlisted Advisor Passes Away

Retired Chief Master Sgt. James “Jim” Rossi, who formerly served as the Air Force Reserve’s top NCO, died June 26. He was 67 years of age.

Rossi served the majority of his Reserve career at March Air Reserve Base, California, where he worked in air transportation, as an aerial porter and as a loadmaster. Rossi left California to become the senior enlisted advisor to the Reserve commander at Robins Air Force Base, Georgia, a position he held from Aug. 31, 1991, to Sept. 30, 1995. The senior enlisted advisor position is equivalent to the Air Force Reserve Command command chief position today.

Those who knew him say he led by example according to his leadership statement: “Leaders must listen and provide inspiration. ... must always put their subordinates before themselves while recognizing deserving Airmen.”

Upon Rossi’s retirement from the Air Force Reserve in 1995, he returned to March ARB and continued serving as a civilian employee, managing the base operation services contract. He was responsible for supply, transportation, airfield management, transient alert, fuels and the traffic management office.

In the fall of 2014, Rossi accepted a job at Burbank Airport as the operations manager.

Rossi is survived by his wife, Nancy; two daughters; a son; and two grandchildren. (*The Beacon, March ARB’s weekly newspaper*)

## Resources Provide Information for Supervisors of Civilians

Some enlisted members — those in the active Guard and Reserve or Air reserve technicians — who supervise civilian employees don’t have to worry about taking the Advanced Air Force Supervisor’s Course.

The course is required for all supervisors of civilians and must be completed within 180 days of assuming supervisory duties.

However, enlisted members who have completed the NCO Academy in residence within five years of assuming supervisory responsibility for

civilians qualify for “equivalency credit,” which means they don’t have to take the course. If it has been more than five years since they took the in-residence professional military education, the equivalency credit provision does not apply. As a result, they must take the supervisor’s course.

Details about this requirement are available at the Civilian Development Resource Center on the Air Force Portal. The CDRC is an online clearinghouse providing access to development roadmaps, learning programs, and thousands of no-cost courses, books, videos, job aids, simulations, articles and more.

Formerly known as the Supervisor Resource Center, the site offers easier navigation and a broader array of resources that support professional development for non-supervisory and supervisory career tracks.

Also, enlisted members who have questions about any issue pertaining to PME or training requirements necessary for supervising civilians should contact their servicing force support squadron force development flight or civilian personnel office for more information. (*Some information in this article was taken from an Air Force News Service story.*)

## New Lodging Program Reduces Rates, Improves Safety and Security

The Defense Department launched a new lodging program June 15 on a limited basis that provides government and commercial lodging with greater safety and security and better services at reduced rates.

Travelers who go on temporary duty for 30 days or less to select DOD locations are directed to book lodging in the Defense Travel System and use government or preferred commercial lodging before other lodging accommodations.

The effort to develop an enterprise-wide program was facilitated by the 2015 National Defense Authorization Act, which authorizes the secretary of defense to institute a government lodging program to provide quality government or commercial lodging for civilians and members of the military services performing duty on official travel.

The pilot program includes travel to Joint Base Charleston, South Carolina; Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio; select military installations in Norfolk, Virginia; Naval Support Activity Saratoga Springs, New York; the Seattle-Tacoma, Washington, area; MacDill AFB, Florida; and the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center at Twentynine Palms, California.

The lodging program not only provides an opportunity for the DOD to leverage its collective purchasing power, but also incorporate program enhancements that ensure a certain level of “duty of care” for its travelers. Specifically, it will:

- Enable travelers to use DTS to find trusted lodging providers.
- Ensure travelers stay in quality lodging facilities that are close to TDY locations; are protected from certain fees; and receive amenities at no additional cost with room rates below the established government per diem rates.
- Enhance traveler care and satisfaction; provide greater traveler security; reduce lodging expenditures; and improve program management and data collection.

The Joint Travel Regulation, paragraph 1265, states that service members and civilian travelers who are TDY

to a military installation at an Integrated Lodging Program Pilot site are required to first book government lodging, if available, and then preferred commercial lodging. If TDY to a pilot site city or metro area, travelers are directed to use DOD preferred commercial lodging before booking other lodging options. If government or preferred commercial lodging at a pilot location is available and a traveler chooses to stay in other lodging, reimbursement for lodging costs is limited to the amount the government would have paid if the traveler stayed in either government (if available) or a participating preferred commercial lodging property.

An authorizing official may authorize exceptions based on mission, distance or lower rate, as well as other exceptions listed in the JTR.

To support this new program, DTS has been modified to guide travelers to selecting the directed lodging at the TDY location. Another feature is that the system automatically secures a non-availability confirmation number when directed government lodging is not available, as required by policy. This is an added convenience and prevents the traveler from having to contact the facility directly to secure the number. Additionally, when traveling to non-pilot sites, travelers are able to book government lodging facilities directly in DTS.

More information, including frequently asked questions and a description of the new DTS functionality, is available on the Defense Travel Management Office website at <http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/>. (*DTMS news release*)

## Air Force Announces Evaluation, Promotion Changes

With static closeout dates for each rank in place, the Air Force announced it will update the enlisted performance report forms and utilize new forced distribution and senior rater stratification restrictions to round out the incremental changes to enlisted evaluation and promotion systems with performance as the driving factor in promotions.

For technical sergeants and below, forced distribution will limit the top-two promotion recommendations a commander is authorized to give to promotion-eligible Airmen. The restrictions under forced distribution are tied to historical promotion rates in each grade designed to ensure those Airmen receiving a top-tier promotion recommendation have a distinct advantage for promotion. The total number of forced distribution quotas is based on the total number of promotion-eligible Airmen a commander has in a specific grade on the SCOD.

“The revised enlisted evaluation system provides ratees with meaningful feedback on rater expectations, a reliable, long-term cumulative record of performance and a clear indication of their promotion potential,” said Lt. Gen. Sam Cox, deputy chief of staff for manpower, personnel and services. “With nearly 90 percent of Airmen receiving ‘truly among the best’ assessments, a better means of identifying the top performers was absolutely necessary.”

New regular Air Force promotion eligibility cutoff dates for promotions to master sergeant and technical sergeant took effect this past fall to correlate with the new SCODs and in support of the master sergeant promotion process and forced distribution requirements scheduled for implementation beginning in November 2015.

Airmen who are not eligible for promotion on their EPR static closeout date will receive an assessment of performance without a promotion recommendation.

“This is one of the key steps we need to take to truly ensure performance counts and that the promotion system is about performance first,”



said Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force James Cody. “There has to be a level of discernment when it comes to promotions; this step gives us the tools to do just that.”

For senior NCOs, stratification restrictions will limit the number of stratifications a senior rater may give to their master sergeant and senior master sergeant promotion-eligible populations. Endorsement by senior raters will be restricted beginning with senior master sergeant EPRs closing out in July 2015. Senior raters will be restricted to endorsing only the top 10 percent of their master sergeant promotion-eligibles and the top 20 percent of their senior master sergeant promotion-eligibles.

The forced distribution process was built with similarities to the senior airman below-the-zone promotion process. There will be large units, with enough Airmen to earn outright promotion allocations, and small units that will roll up nominated promotion-eligibles to an enlisted forced distribution panel led by the senior rater.

Once the EFDP selects the eligibles who will receive the top promotion recommendations, the remaining eligibles will receive outright promotes. Airmen receiving “promote” recommendations from the EFDP or directly from their unit continue to have significant opportunities for promotion as overall promotion percentages exceed the allocations controlled under forced distribution.

Although changes to the EES are a total force initiative, the Air Reserve component will not enforce forced distribution across their junior enlisted promotion eligible grades; however, both the Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard will utilize senior rater endorsement restrictions across the senior NCO grades. (*Secretary of the Air Force public affairs*)

## Guard, Reserve Share Pods Designed to Allow KC-135 Tankers to Get Closer to the Fight

The Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve are scheduled to receive three new system pods that will allow tanker aircraft to safely get closer to the fight for refueling.

Under a \$31.7 million order, Northrop Grumman will provide two full aircraft infrared countermeasures system pods and one shell, designed for the KC-135 Stratotanker, and support flight testing and training activities in fiscal year 2016.

The Guard and Reserve will share the three pods. The pods have 360-degree coverage, can detect and track man-portable air-defense missile launch systems, and use a laser to jam missiles’ guidance system, causing them to miss the target aircraft.

## Pope’s Pun



"The pods can be taken off one aircraft and installed on another with relative ease, so they will be centrally located and installed based on need downrange," said Senior Master Sgt. James Rose, KC-135 weapons system manager at Air Force Reserve Command headquarters, Robins Air Force Base, Georgia. "This is going to make the fuel receivers more efficient because we have the capability to safely stay closer to the fight instead of them needing to come all the way out when they get low on fuel."

The system includes a laser pointer/tracker and four infrared missile-warning sensors. The system is contained in a pod that mounts to the underside of an aircraft body and can be removed from one aircraft and installed on another similar to a child's car seat.

"This open architecture configuration, with its increased capability and reliability, provides the next level of aircraft protection," said Carl Smith, vice president, infrared countermeasure programs, Land and Self-Protection Systems Division, Northrop Grumman. "Block 30 builds on the company's more than 15 years of experience in battle-proven laser-based infrared countermeasures. The third-generation role-fit pod configuration offers reliable, flexible protection that is ideally suited to numerous military and commercial aircraft."

"This system benefits aircrews by allowing them to fly into hotspots without worrying about the missiles the guys on the ground want to fire at them," Rose said.

He said the system pods are scheduled for testing at Tinker AFB, Oklahoma, first and then will be centrally located for joint use wherever they are needed. (*Jaime Upthegrove, AFRC public affairs, Robins AFB*)

### Service Star Authorized for GWOT Expeditionary Medal

Active-duty, Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve Airmen who earned the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal for more than one of the five Department of Defense approved GWOT-EM operations may now wear a service star device on the medal and service ribbon for the second and subsequent awards, Air Force officials said.

The policy is retroactive to Sept. 11, 2001, and covers the following approved operations and inclusive dates:

- Operation Enduring Freedom, Sept. 11, 2001-date to be determined.
- Operation Iraqi Freedom, March 19, 2003-Aug. 31, 2010.

## C-5 Galaxy pilot takes to the skies with her dad for the first time

By Stacy Vaughn

Capt. Jennifer Byrne has had a passion for flying since she was 8 years old. The C-17 Globemaster III pilot with the 89th Airlift Squadron at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, recently had the opportunity to fulfill another dream of hers: flying a commercial flight along with her dad, Scott Byrne.

The dad-and-daughter duo, both pilots for American Airlines, had the opportunity to fly together for the first time March 15 as first officer and captain. The flight originated in Chicago and concluded in Orange County, California, with a stopover in Dallas-Forth Worth.

The day of the flight, Byrne celebrated her one-year anniversary with American Airlines. Her father has worked for the company since 1990. She credits her role as a Reservist to how this opportunity came about.

"I certainly wouldn't have had this opportunity without the outstanding training and support I received from the 89th and the 445th Airlift Wing," Jen said. "I'm so grateful and proud to be a member of our wing. The 89th AS has become a second family, and I'm very grateful to be a part of it."

Byrne joined the Air Force Reserve in 2009 to make her dream of flying a reality. She grew up with a strong sense of patriotism due to both of her parents, as well as her



**Capt. Jennifer Byrne, a C-17 pilot with the 89th Airlift Squadron at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, flew a commercial flight with her dad, Scott Byrne, from Chicago, through Texas and on to California.**

grandfather, serving in the military.

"My father flew C-130s in the Air Force at Rhein-Main (Air Base), Germany, as well as C-21s here at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base. My mother was a combat medic in the Army based at Stuttgart, Germany, and my grandfather was an airplane mechanic in the Marines."

Looking ahead, Byrne sees herself moving up in rank and still flying as a commer-

cial and C-17 pilot for the 89th. She also plans to participate in more recruiting efforts on behalf of the Reserve.

"Joining the Reserve was the best decision I've ever made, and I'd like to help a new generation follow their dreams in the military," Byrne said.

(*Vaughn is assigned to the 445th Airlift Wing public affairs office at Wright-Patterson AFB.*)

- Operation Nomad Shadow, Nov. 5, 2007-date to be determined.
- Operation New Dawn, Sept. 1, 2010-Dec. 31, 2011.
- Operation Inherent Resolve, June 15, 2014-date to be determined.

Here's how the policy works. An Airman, for example, who earned the GWOT Expeditionary Medal for an Operation Enduring Freedom deployment and a second medal for a New Dawn deployment would wear the medal or service ribbon with one service star device.

Although the policy is retroactive, conversions are not authorized. Airmen who initially earned the GWOT-EM and elected to accept the Iraqi Campaign, Afghanistan Campaign or Air Force Expeditionary Medal instead cannot convert back to the GWOT-EM and add a service star for subsequent awards.

Airmen awarded the GWOT-EM who have completed a subsequent deployment to a qualifying area/operation should take supporting documents to their local military personnel section to have their records updated to reflect the award of a service star to their GWOT-EM. Supporting documents include contingency exercise deployment orders or completed paid travel vouchers, or decoration citations that indicate the deployment dates, deployment area and/or name of the operation. (*Debbie Gildea, Air Force Personnel Center, Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph, Texas*)

### DOD Updates Equal Opportunity Program

The Defense Department has updated its military equal opportunity program to protect service members against discrimination because of sexual orientation, Defense Secretary Ash Carter said June 9.

Speaking at a DOD-Pentagon Pride Month event, the secretary said the department has made a lasting commitment to living the values it defends, including treating everyone equally.

"We have to focus relentlessly on the mission, which means the thing that matters most about a person is what they can contribute to it," Carter said.

The update, he said, "ensures that the department, like the rest of the federal government, treats sexual-orientation-based discrimination the same way it treats discrimination based on race, religion, color, sex, age and national origin."

"This is good news for anyone in the Air Force Reserve who feels like they are being discriminated against because of their sexual orientation," said Lee Floyd, Air Force Reserve Command's equal opportunity program manager. "In the past, people in this situation could not use EO channels to file a complaint. Their only options were to go through their chain of command or through the inspector general system. Now, they can go to their EO office, and their case will be treated just like any other EO complaint."

"Treating all service members with dignity and respect is something we take extremely seriously in AFRC," Floyd said. "When there are any indications that those values are not being followed, our EO offices stand ready to conduct investigations and take action as necessary."

"With this policy revision, we are now ensuring that service members are afforded protection against discrimination in the department's military equal opportunity program," said Navy Lt. Cmdr. Nate Christensen, a DOD spokesman. Service members now will be able to use command channels, the DOD inspector general's office and the military equal opportunity process, just as civilians are able to use civilian equal employment opportunity programs to resolve discrimination complaints based on sexual orientation, he said.

(*Some information for this article was taken from a story written by Cheryl Pellerin, DOD News, Defense Media Activity, Fort Meade, Maryland.*)



## False Promises of Great Returns

By Ralph Lunt

I'm amazed at the number of high-paid athletes, movie stars, performers and hard-working Americans who find themselves in unfortunate financial circumstances due to non-registered, ill-advised investments.

Investments at reputable brokerages have a due-diligence process that doesn't guarantee return but does validate the legitimacy of the product sponsor. I have seen many stories over the years of individuals putting money in investments that haven't been through a thorough due-diligence process and "chasing" returns that are in excess of stock or bond market averages.

Recently I saw the story of a pro athlete who lost more than \$10 million investing in businesses reported to be owned by his financial advisor. Quite frankly, I can think of very few situations in which this would be permitted or sensible.

Financial advisors are like coaches: Use them to educate yourself about investments, risks, fees, expected outcomes, etc. Ensure that anything you invest in has detailed information and a prospectus. Quite frankly, I would never invest in anything without checking out the sponsor website first. Legitimate brokers have to be licensed with various agencies to conduct investment business. You can view licenses and states a broker is approved to conduct business in by visiting <http://brokercheck.finra.org/>.

To be fair to my fellow professionals, there are those who focus on constructing financial plans that may not be listed on the website but certainly can be extremely honorable and highly qualified.

Those who are most vulnerable to unsuitable investments are the elderly, people preparing to retire and people in line for inheritances. Stay away from promises of great returns. They typically are a great mistake. 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, 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.*)



# Mr. Aviation

**Howard Cannon's lifetime of service to his nation, the Air Force and the aviation industry**

By Col. Robert P. Palmer

*Just as we passed Breda [The Netherlands], we were hit. I heard a terrific explosion in our left engine. The left propeller vanished, there was a huge hole in our side and companionway, and the cockpit was a shambles of broken glass. With the controls gone, the ship began to nose down in a spiral. I rang the signal bell ordering the crew to bail out.*

*Hydraulic fluid from the shot-out lines spurted all over us, almost blinding me. I groped for my parachute but slipped on the fluid and fell on my face. When I regained my balance, I had a hard time getting out of my flak suit, but I finally hooked on the chute pack and managed to reach the cabin door with the aid of Colonel [Frank] Krebs. The rest of the crew had already bailed out.*

*I had never jumped before. Hardly able to see, I dived. When my parachute billowed out, I was at an altitude of 800 feet.*

That is how Maj. Howard Cannon, a C-47 Skytrain pilot with the 440th Troop Carrier Group, describes the events of Sept. 17, 1944, in an article he wrote for the March 26, 1961, issue of "Family Weekly."

Along with the group's commander, Col. Frank X. Krebs, Cannon was piloting a C-47 named "Miss Yank" back to its

base in England after having dropped paratroopers from the 3rd Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment, near Arnhem Bridge when a C-47 from the 441st TCG collided with his aircraft.

According to Cannon's biographer, Michael Vernetti, once Cannon and Krebs were on the ground, they were greeted by

a Dutch farmer, Piet Withagen, who helped them bury their parachutes and gear. Cannon said local policemen who were part of the Dutch underground helped them evade German troops in the area.

"With the policemen slowly riding their bicycles ahead of us, we started the longest walk I've ever taken," Cannon wrote. "The Germans would have shot without warning anyone out after curfew without special identification. Three times we encountered enemy patrols, but the policemen tipped us off, and we kept out of sight until the patrols passed."

Cannon and Krebs eventually reached a farm, where they were hidden in a shed. They were greeted by a Dutch "reception committee," neighboring farmers who brought them bread, cheese and hot milk.

"Everyone there wanted to shake hands with us," Cannon recounted. "It gave me a singular feeling of brotherhood that I had never before experienced."

Cannon and Krebs initially hid in a department store, where they slept in the upholstery department. They would escape to the store owner's house via a tunnel or climb through a trap door and hide on top of the elevator when the Germans would barge into the store. They were joined by other downed Airmen, including British and Canadian flyers, until there were 13 of them — too many to safely hide in the store.

The Dutch Resistance provided Cannon and Krebs with civilian clothes, ration books and forged identification papers for their escape. Cannon's Dutch alias was a city clerk, while Krebs posed as a school teacher. They traveled for miles, staying in the homes of sympathetic Dutch families.

They spent a period of time living under the floor of a Dutch officer who had spent 18 months in a Nazi prison. Because the house was routinely searched by German soldiers, Cannon and Krebs felt they were endangering the lives of the officer and his family. They decided to move on and were issued new identities — Krebs as a farmer and Cannon as his hired hand.

Cannon and Krebs rendezvoused with two teenaged Dutch boys who were munching on apples, the recognition signal. The Dutch boys guided Cannon and Krebs to the American lines, and a few days later they rejoined their unit after spending 42 days behind German lines.

"It is not a profile of heroism by a couple of jittery American Airmen, the real heroes are the Dutch people," Cannon wrote. "Col. Krebs and I were symbols of the free world. We were important to all these vanquished but unconquerable people who treasured the dignity of liberty."

After the war, Cannon returned stateside to Nevada, where he married Dorothy Pace. As the Army Air Force moved toward becoming a separate military service, Cannon was offered a regular

commission, but he turned it down and chose to serve in the Air Force Reserve. He passed the Nevada bar exam and began a lucrative law practice in Las Vegas. In 1949, Cannon was elected to the first of four consecutive terms as the Las Vegas city attorney.

In 1958, he decided to run for the U.S. Senate. He had launched a bid for the Democratic nomination for U.S. representative in 1956, and his narrow loss demonstrated that he was a political commodity. He challenged the incumbent Republican senator, George "Molly" Malone, who was first elected to the seat in 1946. On election day, Cannon won handily over Malone, receiving 48,732 votes to Malone's 35,760, and captured 10 of Nevada's 16 counties. Cannon joined the "Class of 58" in the Senate, which included future greats such as Robert C. Byrd of West Virginia, Philip Hart of Michigan and Edmund Muskie of Maine.

In the Senate, Cannon quickly established himself as an expert on aviation and defense issues. As a freshman, he drew



**Then-Maj. Howard Cannon poses for a photograph. Cannon logged more than 5,000 flying hours and flew most of the Air Force's most sophisticated aircraft, including the F-100 Super Sabre, F-101 Voodoo, F-102 Delta Dagger, F-104 Starfighter, F-105 Thunderchief, F-106 Delta Dart, B-58 Hustler and F-111 Aardvark.**

an assignment to the Senate Armed Services Committee, then under the chairmanship of Sen. Richard Russell of Georgia, and Cannon eventually went on to chair the Tactical Air Power Subcommittee. In 1963, Cannon was appointed to the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee, where he chaired the Aviation Subcommittee from 1971 to 1981 and chaired the full committee from 1978 to 1981.

Cannon remained a member of the Air Force Reserve while serving in the Senate and eventually attained the rank of major general. His last Reserve assignment was assistant to the commander, Headquarters Air Force Systems Command at Andrews Air Force Base, Maryland.

According to a December 1971 article in "Air Line Pilot" magazine, Cannon's logbook showed more than 5,000 flying hours, and he flew most of the Air Force's most sophisticated aircraft at the time, including the F-100 Super Sabre, F-101 Voodoo, F-102 Delta Dagger, F-104 Starfighter, F-105 Thunderchief and F-106 Delta Dart.

"Two of my biggest thrills came from flying the B-58 at Mach 2 in 1961 and the F-111 at Nellis Air Force Base (Nevada) when the plane was first put into the Air Force," Cannon told the magazine.

In the Senate, Cannon was an advocate for air power and aviation. He was a proponent for the development of the F-111, the C-5 and the XB-70 supersonic bomber. He co-sponsored and played a key role in passing the Airport and Airways Development Act of 1970, which addressed funding for the airport and airway system through the creation of the Airport and Airway Trust Fund.

Cannon was also an early voice for space power. In a June 1963 article he penned for the "Saturday Evening Post," Cannon wrote, "If we dismiss the military potential in space, we may be startled one day — like the day Sputnik I was orbited — to discover, from the accomplishments of potential enemies, how wrong we have been, and by then, because technology is advancing in ever-longer quantum jumps, it may be too late to do anything about it."

Cannon's experience as a Reservist and veteran paid dividends for the Senate and for Nevada.

"When he was in the Senate, he test-flew all new aircraft before voting for money to develop them, and he could really fly those airplanes," recalled Sen. Harry Reid, the senior senator from Nevada. "He helped preserve Nellis Air Force Base when it was threatened with Air Force funding cuts and worked to make Nellis what it is now — the preeminent military installation for training American fighter pilots."

Cannon also inspired others to pursue public service.



**Sen. Howard Cannon (right) and his military legislative assistant, Frank Krebs, pose in front of a painting depicting their escape from German-held territory during World War II. The painting, which hung in Cannon's Senate office, was painted by Roy Weinzettel, an intelligence officer with the 440th Troop Carrier Group, Cannon's old unit.**

of Nevada, Las Vegas); and every day in my district office, I have the privilege of sitting behind his personal desk loaned to me by his daughter, Nancy Downey," said Rep. Dina Titus, 1st Congressional District of Nevada, noting that the desk serves as a constant reminder of Cannon's distinguished legacy as a war hero and political giant. "My internship with Senator Cannon helped spark my passion for public service and led to my work, academic and political, on behalf of downwinders: soldiers and workers exposed to radiation during nuclear weapons tests at the Nevada Test Site."

"My children, in particular, take great pride in their grandfather and all he stood for, and my youngest son has always had a desire to serve in the military," Downey said. "He never missed a chance to go with grandpa and be treated as a VIP at Nellis Air Force Base to watch the air shows. Tyler Cannon Downey is currently on active duty in the U.S. Army stationed in Alaska and hopes someday to fly helicopters."

There is an interesting footnote to the story of Cannon and Krebs. In addition to flying side by side during Operation Overlord and Operation Market Garden, they had the chance to work together again later in life. While serving in the Senate, Cannon hired Krebs to be his military legislative assistant. Krebs monitored legislation before the Senate Armed Services Committee and advised Cannon on defense issues.

"I don't know when Frank started working for dad, but he was with him until the end of his Senate service," Downey said.

*(Editor's note: This story is part of a regular series of articles that highlight the unique capabilities Air Force Reservists bring to the fight every day. When he wrote this article, Palmer was the director of public affairs for Air Force Reserve Command at Robins Air Force Base, Georgia. This month, he left that active Guard and Reserve position for a civilian job in Wisconsin. He will continue serving in the Reserve as an individual mobilization augmentee at U.S. Transportation Command, Scott Air Force Base, Illinois. Make sure to check out future issues of the magazine for more Profiles in Leadership.)*

"He was a great senator and a true war hero," Reid said "For me, personally, I remember him helping me prepare for the bar exam back when I was in law school. I was attending law school full time during the day and working the night shift as a Capitol Police officer. Even though he was a Senator who was tremendously burdened with responsibilities, he still took the time to have me in his office to help me prepare for that bar exam."

"In 1982, I served as Senator Cannon's faculty intern from UNLV (University



**Maj. Elisabeth King is an instructor pilot with the Reserve's 96th Flying Training Squadron at Laughlin Air Force Base, Texas, and a single mom with five young children, including two girls she recently adopted. (Courtesy photos)**

## Single mother of five teaches future pilots about flying and life

By Bo Joyner

What does a super-busy single mom with three young sons and a demanding career as an Air Force Reserve instructor pilot do when she comes across two little girls in desperate need of a loving and nurturing home? If you're Maj. Elisabeth King, the answer is easy: you adopt them.

King, an instructor pilot with the Reserve's 96th Flying Training Squadron at Laughlin Air Force Base, Texas, and her three sons — ages 9, 7 and 5 — now have two sisters, 5 and 4, sharing their Del Rio, Texas, home. ... and they couldn't be happier.

"When I talked to the boys about the possibility of adopting their sisters, they were super excited," King said. "These girls came from a really awful background, and they needed a good home. I've always tried to teach my kids how important it is to give back to your community and take care of other people, and I guess they were listening because they were all in favor of opening up our home to the girls."

King grew up in the small town of Frederic, Wisconsin, as the oldest of seven children. She said that from an early age, her parents instilled in her and her siblings the importance of giving back. It was also at an early age that she dreamed of serving her country as an Air Force pilot. ... and she worked extremely hard to see her dream come true.

Out of high school, she enlisted and became a boom operator on the KC-135 Stratotanker. While working as a boomer, King completed her bachelor's degree and obtained her commission as an officer, completing Officer Training School as a distinguished graduate. In 2001, she was awarded a pilot slot. She graduated from Air Force pilot training at Laughlin and received a KC-135R assignment to Eielson AFB, Alaska, where she served as one of a couple female pilots in her Air National Guard unit for more than 10 years.

While flying the Stratotanker, King participated in numerous deployments in support of Operations Enduring Freedom, Noble Eagle, Northern Watch and Southern Watch.

"I loved my time in the KC-135," she said, "but I had always wanted to give teaching a shot."

In 2011, she made the switch to the Air Force Reserve and accepted a position as an instructor pilot with the 96th FTS.

Using the T-1 Jayhawk, T-6 Texan II and T-38 Talon, instructor pilots from the 96th FTS work with the active-duty 47th Flying Training Wing to train the next generation of Air Force pilots. Not only does King teach the mechanics of flying, she is also able to offer insight on what it's like to be a female in a male-dominated profession, and she can offer advice on how to balance family and work.

"I like mentoring young pilots, and hopefully they can learn from some of the experiences I have had," she said. "I can definitely give young people some tips on how to juggle flying for the Air Force while taking care of your family at the same time."

The commander of the 96th FTS, Lt. Col. Richard Morneau, said King is one of the best instructor pilots in the 96th.

"The thing that stands out about Major King is that she has a huge heart for helping people," he said. "And that carries over into her teaching. She is always willing to go the extra mile to help our students achieve their goals. She's just a great teacher and mentor for her students."

"What's really amazing is that she does all of this, does such a great job for us here at the 96th, while raising five young children. She does have a full-time nanny, and I know that's a huge help, but Liz really understands the importance of balancing work and home life and, as a single mother of five, she is a living example of how to keep this important balance."

These days, King's home life is filled with school, homework, church, play days, Scouts and dozens of other activities.

"We are always on the go, but we make it work," she said. "I wouldn't have it any other way."

And no matter how busy they get, King makes sure she and her kids find time to give back to their community, whether it's at their church or at other charities where they donate their time.

"The most important thing to me is to be grateful, be good citizens and help take care of people who may be less fortunate than you."



**Maj. Jay Pease, 39th Flying Training Squadron instructor pilot, performs a pre-flight check on a T-38 Talon aircraft at Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph, Texas. Members of the 39th play a key role in the instructor pilot training mission by providing both manpower and experience. (Harold China)**

# Training the Trainers

## 39th FTS instructor pilots impact generations

**By Staff Sgt. Sarah Hanson**

Snuggled in the outskirts of San Antonio lies Randolph Air Force Base, which houses a unique squadron with a very serious mission — to train those who will train future Air Force pilots.

The 39th Flying Training Squadron, which falls under the 340th Flying Training Group, has a mission to provide the Air Force with top-notch instructor pilots. The Reserve squadron of 62 trains and mentors up-and-coming instructor pilots who, in turn, train the next generation of Air Force pilots.

According to its website, the 340th FTG's mission is to train and provide a reserve of experienced instructors to aug-

**The Reserve squadron of 62 trains and mentors up-and-coming instructor pilots who, in turn, train the next generation of Air Force pilots.**

ment the Air Education and Training Command instructor cadre. It does that by hiring quality military aviators who meet the established requirements.

"Our instructors have thousands and thousands of hours of flight experience," said Lt. Col. David Partain, 39th FTS commander. "We have instructor pilots who support all four squadrons at Randolph."

Those four squadrons are the 99th, 559th and 560th FTS, and the 435th Fighter Training Squadron.

"We spend most of our operational days at work kind of separated from each other," Partain said. "We have a flight that flies with the T-6 squadron, one with the T-1 and another with the T-38."

The 39th instructor pilots have a lot of flying experience on both the military and civilian side.

"I have about 5,300 hours in the T-38," said Lt. Col. Jeff Wallace, 39th FTS operations officer. "I am

also a civilian airline pilot."

Wallace, whose call sign is Rusty, said he plans to retire this month after 26 years of service. He is leaving with more flying hours in the T-38 than any pilot in Air Force Reserve Command.

"Out of the 25 years I've flown, 22 of them I've been an instructor pilot," Wallace said. "I like teaching and seeing the pilots improve."

"I also feel like it's one of the most important jobs because we start to build the foundation, [and as the students go on with their careers], the Air Force builds on top of that," he said. [For example], "they go on to become F-15 or C-130 pilots, but we teach them the fundamentals."

Recently, the squadron of Reservists held a training event to sharpen their search-and-rescue skills. The 39th FTS joined with other military and civilian agencies May 7 to simulate a search-and-rescue operation involving a downed pilot in open water.

"They dropped a cable, we hooked up, and they extracted us out of the water," said Lt. Col. Rich Lowe, 39th FTS T-6 instructor pilot. "It's realistic training — something that would actually happen in a real scenario."

The search-and-rescue event was part of the squadron's bi-annual training. Members of the 39th FTS were dropped in the middle of Canyon Lake, Texas and each took turns getting hoisted up into a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter.

The training involved agencies such as the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Texas Task Force 1 and the Army National Guard. Each agency supported the event and received some training as well.

"We just had an emergency hoist put on our newest helicopter, which is the same one being used, and it operates the same way," said Dwayne Havis of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Game Warden Aviation Division. "So,

**The 39th FTS's parent organization, the 340th Flying Training Group, is looking for motivated and experienced instructor pilots to join any of its six Reserve flying training squadrons.**

now, we're in the business of doing search and rescues, but we haven't received the training yet.

"We knew this event was happening, so we wanted to come to observe," he said. "By this time next year, we hope to actually participate in it."

The training event wasn't the only activity planned. Later that night, members of the squadron and their families got together for a huge barbecue.

"We don't get to interact on a daily basis, so we come together twice a year and do all of our standard training," Partain said. "And once a year we do a water survival event. The real benefit for me, as a commander, is seeing everybody get together and get to know each other."

Currently the 340th FTG is looking for motivated and experienced instructor pilots to join any of its six Reserve flying training squadrons.

"We want folks who display the Air Force core values, who are committed to serving their country and really committed beyond just our basic job," Partain said. "You'll have a chance to speak into the lives of these young instructors who can then speak into the lives of brand-new Air Force pilots."

"I wouldn't trade what I've done the last 25 years for anything," Wallace said. "Some of these guys were my students back when they were 22, 23 years old, and they remember you if you make a difference for them. Hopefully, you've built a good foundation for them."

For more information on the 340th FTG or how to join, visit the unit's website at <http://www.afrc.af.mil/Units/340FTG.aspx>.



**Ken Larsen, Texas Task Force 1 helicopter rescue swimmer, gives a safety briefing to members of the 39th FTS before a training event at Canyon Lake, Texas. The training event included a downed pilot scenario, and all the members of the 39th FTS took turns being extracted out of the lake via helicopter. (Staff Sgt. Sarah Hanson)**

# Total Force Family

Capt. Matt Shelly (left) is an active-duty A-10 pilot assigned to the 74th Fighter Squadron at Moody Air Force Base, Georgia. His younger brother, Chris, a first lieutenant, is a Reserve A-10 pilot assigned to the 76th FS, also at Moody. (Bo Joyner)

## Brothers savoring their time together as A-10 pilots at Moody

By Bo Joyner

It's highly unusual for siblings who are both Air Force pilots to be stationed at the same base at the same time, so Chris Shelly and his brother, Matt, are making the most of their time together at Moody Air Force Base in Valdosta, Georgia.

Chris, a first lieutenant, is an Air Force Reserve A-10 pilot assigned to the 76th Fighter Squadron, while Matt, a captain, is an active-duty A-10 pilot assigned to the 74th FS, whose members are affectionately known as the world-famous Flying Tigers. The 74th is part of the 23rd Fighter Group, which is famous for its shark teeth-sporting A-10C Thunderbolt II aircraft. The 76th is a part of the 476th Fighter Group and is a Total Force Integration unit that is integrated into the 23rd Fighter Group.

The Shelly brothers grew up in Wichita, Kansas, and learned to love flying at an early age from their father, an avid private pilot who works for the Boeing Company. They have two more brothers and one sister – one of their brothers is a vehicle mechanic in the Air Force. Matt, who is 32 and four years older than Chris, attended Kansas State University at Salina on an ROTC scholarship and began his Air Force career immediately after graduation. Chris went to Wichita State University, earning a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering, and worked for three years in the civilian sector before deciding to follow his older brother into the Air Force.

"I definitely encouraged Chris to think about becoming an Air Force pilot, but I didn't have to push him too hard," Matt said. "We both grew up flying, and I think he could see how much I loved flying A-10s, so it wasn't a hard sell at all."

What is a little unusual, however, is that Matt actually encouraged Chris to join the Air Force Reserve instead of the active-duty Air Force.

"I told Chris that the Reserve might be a good way to go because you have a little more freedom in choosing what kind of aircraft you want to fly in the Reserve than you do in active duty."

"If you go active duty, the Air Force tells you what you will be flying," Chris said. "By going into the Air Force Reserve, I was able to apply specifically to A-10 squadrons because I knew I wanted to fly A-10s."

Chris applied to both the 76th FS at Moody and the Reserve's 303rd FS at Whiteman AFB in Missouri and accepted a position with the 76th. He is currently serving a full-time active Guard and Reserve seasoning tour at Moody so he can build up his proficiency in the A-10. He will eventually become a traditional Reservist assigned to the 76th.

Chris completed pilot training and arrived at Moody in January, the same time Matt returned to South Georgia from a three-year stint flying MQ-9 Reapers out of Creech AFB in Nevada.

Chris, his wife and their 1-year-old son rented a house right across the street from where Matt and his wife live with their three boys: ages 6, 4 and 1.

"It's been great being stationed here with Matt," Chris said. "Not just because of flying A-10s but because of the family thing as well. Our wives are best friends, and our kids are getting the chance to grow up right across the street from each other. It couldn't have worked out any better."

Reserve and active-duty A-10 pilots fly training missions together all the time at Moody, but the Shelly brothers have yet to fly together in their Warthogs over the South Georgia skies.

"It would be really great to have Chris fly on my wing," Matt said.

"He definitely has a lot more experience in the A-10," Chris said. "I'm trying to learn everything I can, so I think it would be great to fly with Matt. The Air Force doesn't like to have people from the same family flying missions together just in case there is some kind of an accident, but there is a chance we might get to fly together some day. I think it would be a blast."

Chris has yet to deploy in the A-10, but when he does deploy he will definitely be looking to Matt for advice on flying the Thunderbolt II in combat.

Matt has two deployments under his belt and has a lot to share with his younger brother.

"I really enjoyed my deployments," he said. "There is nothing like the feeling you get when you support our troops on the ground during a Close Air Support mission."

CAS is air action against hostile targets that are close to friendly ground forces. It requires detailed integration with the troops on the ground and other aircraft in the area.

Just like his older brother, Chris enjoys the CAS mission and piloting the A-10.

"It's a great plane to fly, and I'm thrilled to be serving my country in the Air Force Reserve," he said. "Being stationed at the same base with my brother is just icing on the cake."



Senior Airman Matthew Mira (left) and Staff Sgt. Philip Blas, both assigned to the 44th Aerial Port Squadron at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, work together to tighten down cargo straps during the pallet buildup portion of the Port Dawg Challenge at Dobbins Air Reserve Base, Georgia. The challenge was created to enhance and maintain the camaraderie, esprit de corps and prestige of aerial port Airmen while promoting professionalism, leadership, training and communication. (Tech Sgt. Stephen D. Schester)



Senior Airman Alexandria Moton, 25th APS at Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama, runs during the fit-to-fight event. (Tech Sgt. Stephen D. Schester)

# TOP DAWGS

By Senior Airman Joshua Slavin

Aerial porters from Youngstown Air Reserve Station, Ohio, won the 2015 Top Dawg Challenge at Dobbins Air Reserve Base, Georgia. The three-day bi-annual event, which took place in June, brought together 26 aerial port squadrons from across the command to compete for the coveted Top Dawg trophy.

"This competition brings a new element to the training because of the camaraderie," said Lt. Col. Heather McCue, 2015 Port Dawg Challenge commander. "This is all-encompassing and tests all your skills as an aerial porter."

Port Dawgs are entrusted to ensure aircraft, cargo and passengers are cared for and the Air Force mission succeeds.

The challenge involved 12 events designed to test the teams both mentally and physically. Among the events were a written exam, physical fitness challenge and timed everyday tasks that an aerial port squadron Airmen might encounter.

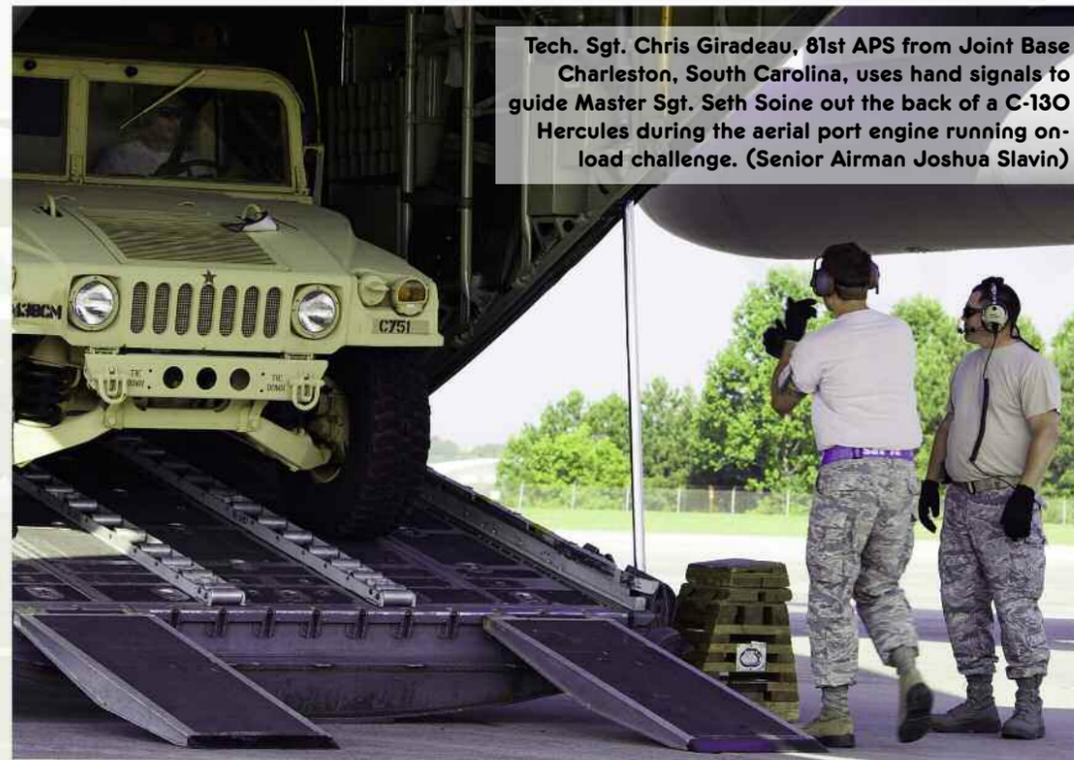
With the Air Force Reserve having more aerial port units than the active-duty Air Force, McCue said she believes the competition is crucial to real-world success.

"The most important thing is the teamwork as a whole and as an Air Force community," McCue said. "The better off we're trained, the better off for the Air Force. We can be better, safer and more efficient."

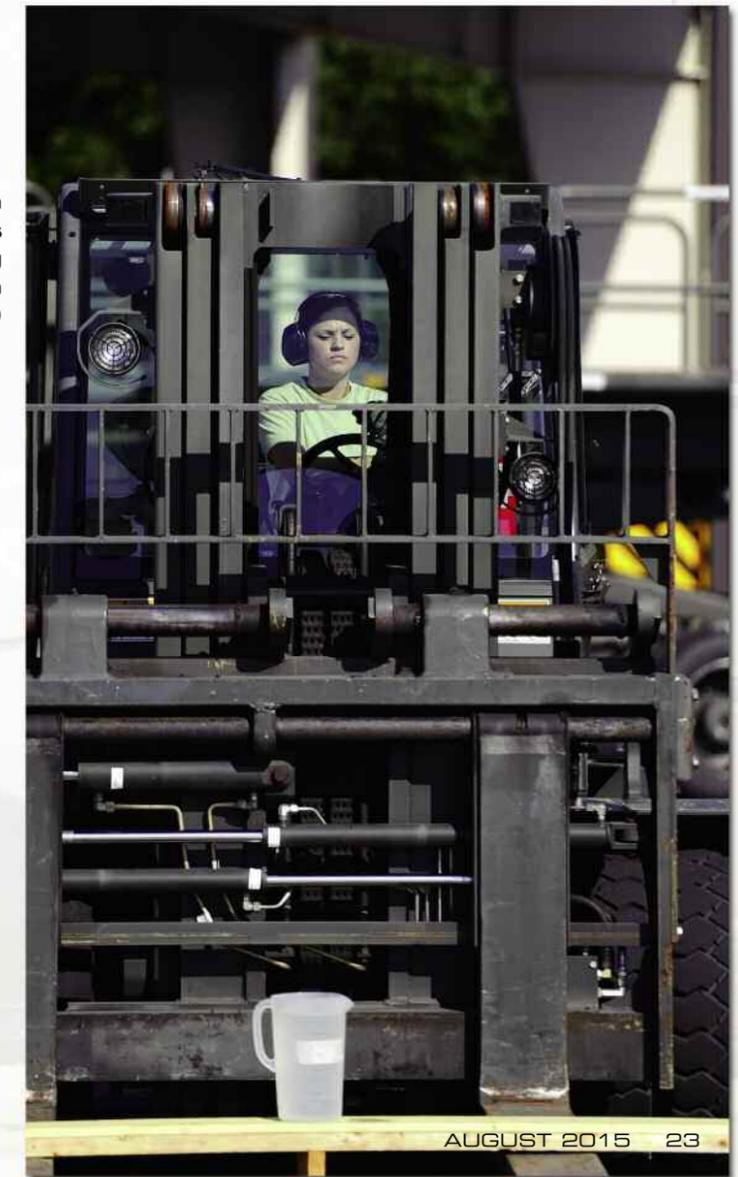
Senior NCOs umpired the various events and provided on-the-spot training. Having such an experienced group of people allowed for an educational environment within the competition. After each event, the umpires would take time to go over mistakes and corrective actions.

"I hope the participants walk away from this [competition] with a better sense of what it means to work as a team," said Senior Master Sgt. Denim Kurtzhals, one of the umpires. "For me, the most rewarding part of being an umpire is seeing the teams come together and learn something new."

*(When he wrote this story, Slavin was a member of the 4th Combat Camera Squadron at March ARB, California. The squadron was inactivated effective July 31.)*



Tech. Sgt. Chris Girardeau, 81st APS from Joint Base Charleston, South Carolina, uses hand signals to guide Master Sgt. Seth Soine out the back of a C-130 Hercules during the aerial port engine running on-load challenge. (Senior Airman Joshua Slavin)



Senior Airman Staci Conrad, 94th APS, Robins AFB, Georgia, attempts to operate a forklift without spilling any water from the pitcher. (Tech Sgt. Stephen D. Schester)

# To Serve and Protect

## Security forces Airman keeps Laughlin and San Antonio safe

By Tech Sgt. Steven R. Doty

Last year in San Antonio and a couple of hours down the road from Laughlin Air Force Base, law enforcement officers made more than 1,600 arrests. Of those arrests, more than 580 were gang-related, and more than 200 firearms were taken off the streets. The credit for pushing gangs off of the “Military City’s” streets goes to the San Antonio Police Department Gang Unit and one Laughlin Airman.

When not in his Airman battle uniform, Air Force Reservist Master Sgt. Christopher Enfinger, 47th Security Forces Squadron alternate operations superintendent, serves as a patrol officer assigned to the SAPD Gang Unit with the monumental task of tackling gang-related activity.

“Our team is responsible for locating and documenting, in a safe and effective manner, gang members and responding to any incidents that have indicators of gang-related activities,” Enfinger said. “Additionally, because we have the freedom to move around the entire city, we’re available if law enforcement or first-responders require additional police presence.”

As one of only 25 people assigned to track and monitor more than 10,000 gang members and 30 different gangs in San Antonio, the job is an ongoing emotional and physical challenge for the 15-year Airman. However, he attributes the dedication and commitment he taps into every day to his experiences and training as a security forces combat arms instructor in the Air Force.

“The training we go through in the Air Force, from basic training to technical training to the way we support and assist each other, makes working in a civilian entity that much easi-

er,” he said. “Structure, discipline and leadership, with the addition of supervision, served as added benefits for making the transition into [SAPD] very comfortable for me and advantageous for my new colleagues.”

Enfinger also acknowledges weapons training and the “warrior mindset” attained in the Air Force as essential tools for laying the foundation for his transition from being a security forces patrolman to a San Antonio police officer.

The SAPD is not the only organization to benefit from his skillset. In fact, Enfinger brings a great deal back to the Air Force and his fellow security forces personnel whenever honoring his service commitment.

“I bring the leadership, supervisory and structure roles from the Air Force back to the [SAPD]; the ‘how we do what we do’ piece,” he said. Enfinger said his military colleagues benefit from a “great deal of real-world experiences, updated techniques, tactics and procedures, and training methods in areas like active shooter in real time that they may not otherwise get. It’s this kind of service and commitment exchange that truly motivates me.”

Having served on active duty in the Air Force for eight years prior to transitioning into the Reserve — and working with the SAPD for five years — Enfinger said pride plays a big part in his life.

“The pride is there, just in different ways,” he said. “In one way, I’m responsible for working with a team [the Air Force] that is responsible for protecting on a global scale, and in another, I work with a team [the SAPD] that is responsible for protecting a city. Either way, I serve in a uniform predicated on protecting lives — that’s my pride.”

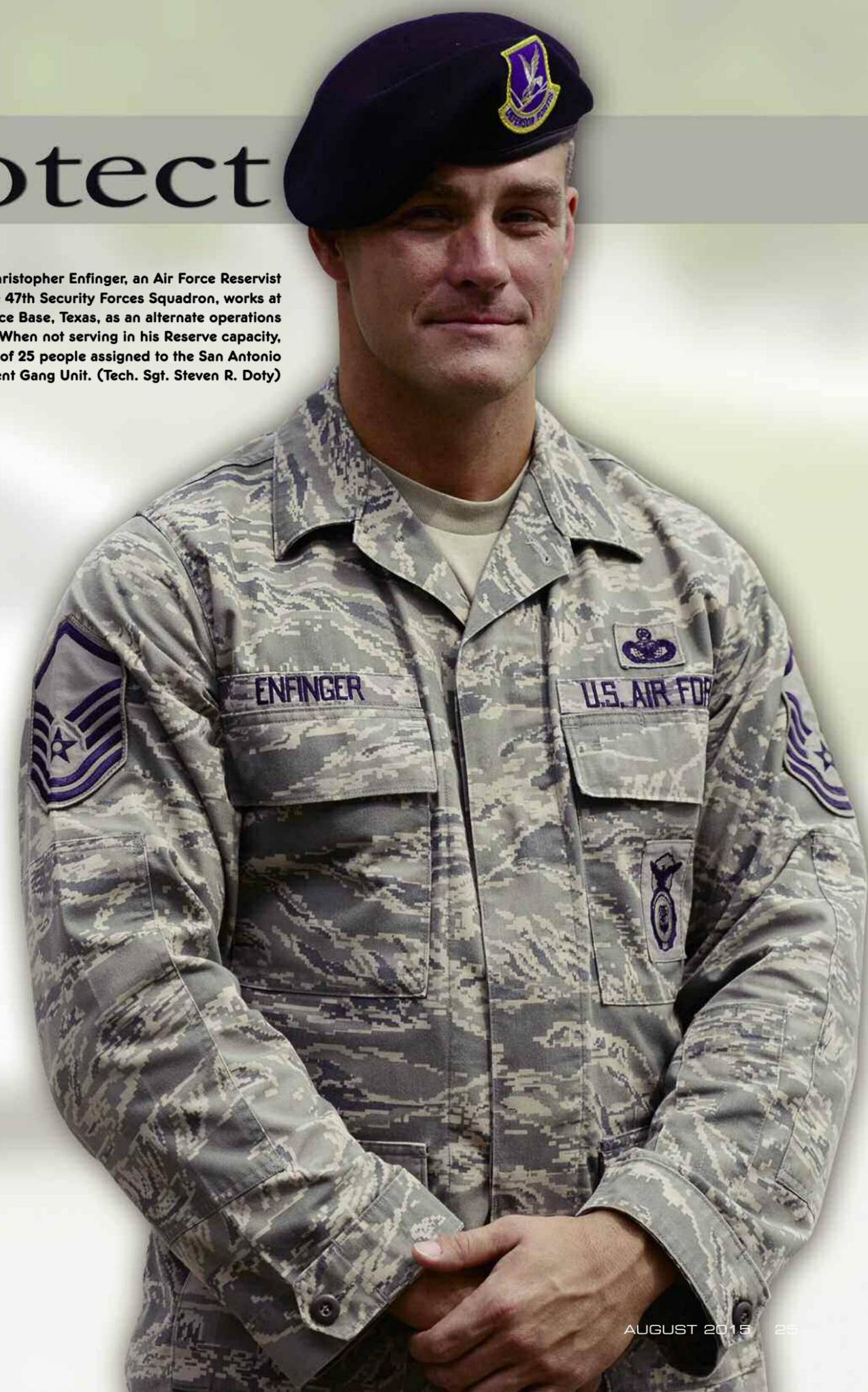
In addition to pride, maintaining civil order and discipline in a city that serves as a sort of hub, or focal point, for so many military service members and their families motivates Enfinger to keep the streets safe. Many of his fellow Airmen from Laughlin routinely travel to San Antonio for weekend retreats, holiday vacations, and various other personal and professional occasions, so safety of “his people” is extremely important.

“The fact that San Antonio has such a large community presence of police, fire and military personnel, it’s very important to me that I am a part of what is helping protect my own,” Enfinger said. “They’re not the bad guys, so making it better and safer for everybody is extremely important.”

Whether at Laughlin AFB or with the SAPD Gang Unit, Enfinger’s commitment to protect and serve represents the intent of the Air Force core values and exemplifies the highest levels of dedication sworn to be upheld by every Airman who takes the oath of enlistment.

*(Doty is assigned to the 47th Flying Training Wing public affairs office at Laughlin AFB.)*

Master Sgt. Christopher Enfinger, an Air Force Reservist assigned to the 47th Security Forces Squadron, works at Laughlin Air Force Base, Texas, as an alternate operations superintendent. When not serving in his Reserve capacity, Enfinger is one of 25 people assigned to the San Antonio Police Department Gang Unit. (Tech. Sgt. Steven R. Doty)





**By Bo Joyner**

For most Americans, living the American dream means living large. ... large house, large vehicles, large piles of stuff, large bills. One Air Force Reservist, however, has done the complete opposite in her quest for achieving the American dream. She's gone small — really small — to live large.

Maj. Lora Higgins, who works in the Commander's Action Group at Headquarters Air Force Reserve Command, Robins Air Force Base, Georgia, is a proud member of the tiny house movement. Higgins lives in a 234-square-foot house that is currently located at the RV park on base. To put things in perspective, the average size of a new family house in the United States in 2013 was 2,662 square feet. You could easily fit 11 of the major's tiny-size houses inside one of today's typical American homes.

## Living Large in a Tiny House



Higgins's tiny house with its pine siding, black metal roof and small porch definitely stands out among all the conventional trailers and campers at the Robins RV park. Although her house is on wheels, it looks just like a traditional home — only much, much, much smaller.

"I think I have more square footage in my two vehicles than I do in my house," Higgins jokes as she pulls up to her charming tiny home to give this reporter a tour.

The tour doesn't take very long. You can walk from the front to the back in about eight steps. Going from side to side takes about two steps.

There's a nook with a comfortable chair and ottoman for reading and watching TV; a custom-built book shelf that holds all of Higgins's favorite reads; an all-in-one washer and dryer; a kitchen with sink, cooktop, refrigerator and microwave; a three-piece bathroom with sink, toilet and shower; a closet; and a small back room that Higgins uses for storage on the main level.

Upstairs is a loft bedroom complete with a queen-sized bed and a separate loft area for more storage.

There's hidden storage everywhere. Each stair leading up to the bedroom is actually a pull-out drawer. The ottoman hides a collection of DVDs. Storage compartments line the side of the upstairs bed.

"It's really well designed," Higgins said. "When you only have 234 square feet, you can't afford any wasted space."

That being said, Higgins estimates that she had to get rid of about 80 percent of all of her "stuff" when she made the move from her traditional 1,800-square-foot,

**Maj. Lora Higgins and her dog, Rocket, love life in their 234-square-foot house on Robins Air Force Base, Georgia. (Photos courtesy of Full Quiver Photography)**

three-bedroom, 2 1/2-bath townhouse in Colorado into her tiny Georgia home in November.

"It was a little scary to get rid of most of my possessions, but it was also incredibly freeing," she said. "That's what this move was all about — living smaller, living simpler so I can be free to travel more and experience more. I would much rather collect experiences than collect more stuff. The bottom line is I just wanted greater freedom and more simplicity in my life."

So, now, instead of spending her weekends working around the house, Higgins is free to hit the road and check items off of her bucket list.

"One of my goals is to run a half-marathon in every state, and now I'm able to work on crossing that off," she said.

In May, the major spent a week with her mom and aunt in Oregon and ran a half-marathon while she was there. A couple of weekends later, she headed to the beach and tried paddle boarding for the first time. On weekends, when most Americans are doing work around their oversized houses, Higgins is out living life.

"Living tiny doesn't take away from your life," she said. "It actually opens you up to new adventures."

It does that in a couple of ways, Higgins said. Tiny homes don't come with the huge mortgages, power bills and associated costs that larger homes often carry, leaving more money for travel and adventure. Then there's the time the major saves on cleaning and maintenance.

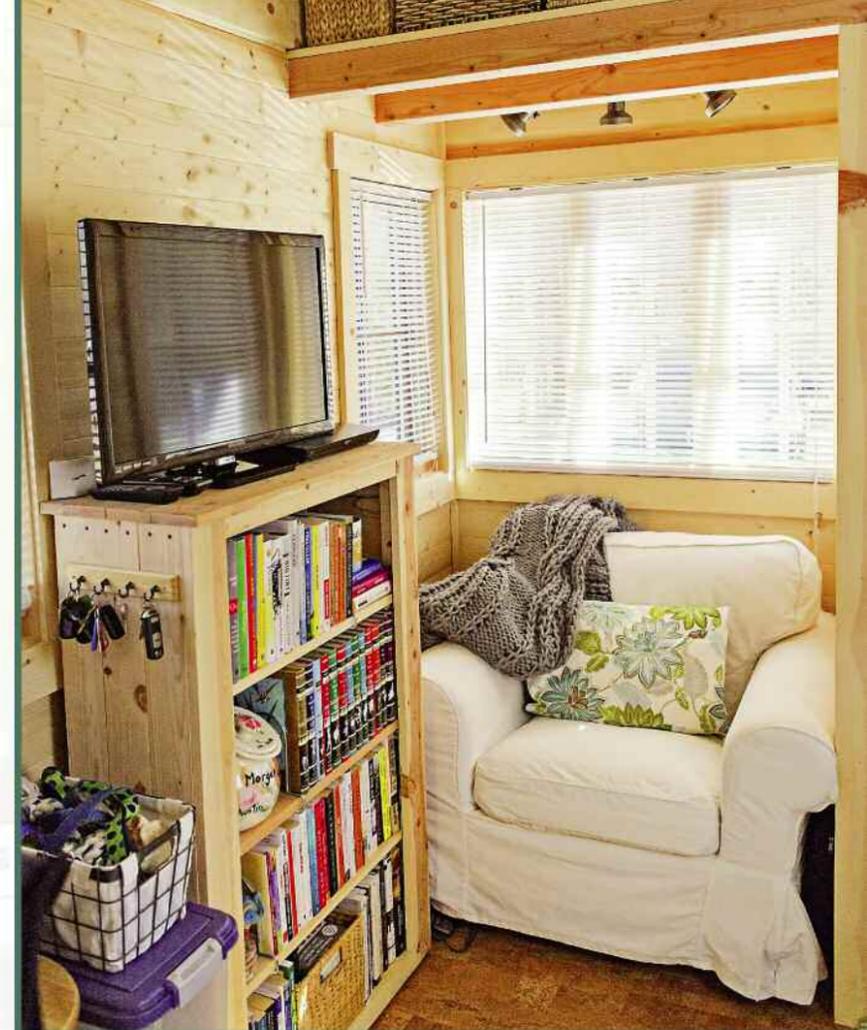
"I did my major spring cleaning a few weeks ago where I cleaned my whole house from top to bottom, and it took less than an hour," she said. "I have a dog, so I run the vacuum every day, but I can vacuum my whole house in a minute or two. When I was living in my last house, it seemed like I was always cleaning or working on some sort of home improvement project. It's not that way at all with a tiny house. You spend way less time cleaning, and you also spend way less time shopping for things for your house."

Higgins's Australian Shepherd, Rocket, seems to love tiny house living as much as his owner.

"I think he thinks this is just a gigantic dog house that he lets me share," she said.

Living in a tiny house has been such a perfect fit for Higgins and her busy lifestyle that she has started her own consulting business to help other people who are thinking about going small. She has her own website ([tinyhouseteacher.com](http://tinyhouseteacher.com)) where she blogs about the tiny house lifestyle. She has even published a book, fittingly called "Dream Big, Live Small."

"I know tiny house living isn't for everyone, but I love it," Higgins said. "In the past I used to feel trapped by all of the stuff in my life. Now, I have a simpler life and a lot more freedom to do all of the things I want to do."



# On the Fast Track

## 459th ARW Reservist studies abroad to jumpstart his IT career

By Staff Sgt. Sarah Hanson

A Reservist with the 459th Air Refueling Wing at Joint Base Andrews, Maryland, recently took advantage of a vocational training program he learned about at a U.S. Chamber of Commerce Hire Our Heroes job fair to improve his civilian employment opportunities.

Staff Sgt. Joe Castro, a 69th Aerial Port Squadron air transportation specialist, attended a senior program management course offered by the FDM Group at its headquarters in London, England.

According to its website, FDM Group is a global professional services provider with a focus on information technology. Its veterans initiative offers military veterans a tailored career path to support their transition into the corporate workforce. Castro is the first member of a reserve component to attend this specific course in London.

"The training FDM provides is designed to complement the training a military member gets, but it's translated to a business or corporate environment," Castro said in an interview while attending the class. "I am learning tools the corporate world uses to manage businesses, and there are a lot of similarities to what military personnel do already."

The four-week course, which Castro completed in June, was filled from beginning to end with complex projects.

"I am learning how the worldwide financial market system works," he said. "I am creating business plans and looking at things like scheduling, risk management and budgeting. It's Monday through Friday, eight-hour days. In addition, you have projects and deliverables you have to do on your own."

After Castro completed the course, he was placed with one of FDM's prestigious clients where he will serve as a consultant with salary and benefits for two years. Once the two-year period is up, the rate of companies hiring FDM consultants to come work for them is more than 90 percent.

"I absolutely recommend this to other people," Castro said. "I think it's a great option for military personnel to get into the corporate world."

"We have nearly 3,000 people deployed worldwide, and roughly 10 percent are former military," said Rod Flavell, FDM Group chief executive officer. "It's a fantastic kick-start for somebody who wants to get into a big IT corporation."

Veterans or reserve component members who are interested in taking advantage of the opportunity can apply online at the FDM Group website ([www.fdmgroup.com/us/](http://www.fdmgroup.com/us/)). Once the application has been submitted, a recruiter will call and give a five-minute interview over the phone. If the interview goes well, the applicant will be asked to take an aptitude test, which could either be in person or online.

"You'll be tested on your IT knowledge, project management skills and terminology that is used [in the business]," Castro said. "If they feel you have the aptitude to gain something from an advanced training course, then you go on to the next step."

According to John Tansill, head of FDM's veterans initiative, last year, globally, the company had more than 40,000 applications, both college graduates and military members, and accepted only 1,300 people.

"If somebody is coming to a satisfactory end in the armed forces and is thinking about what to do next, FDM is a phone call away," Flavell. "We'll be glad to demystify IT and the opportunities surrounding IT and make it real."

"It's worth exploring," Castro said. "It does require commitment because the training is full time, and then you have the [two-year] commitment. [But] if you're not having any luck getting your foot in the door, they definitely will help you. It's a mutually beneficial endeavor."

For more information on FDM's veterans initiative, visit [www.fdmgroup.com/us/about/veterans-initiative/](http://www.fdmgroup.com/us/about/veterans-initiative/).



Staff Sgt. Joe Castro listens during a senior program management course offered by the FDM Group in London.

# Building a Better Future

## Delaware Reservists push for legislation to help people with disabilities

By Master Sgt. Veronica A. Aceveda

When Master Sgts. Michael and Carrie Huot, both members of the 512th Airlift Wing at Dover Air Force Base, Delaware, welcomed their son Leopold into the world seven years ago, they took on a new mission as parents of a child with Down syndrome.

Their journey of love, learning and advocacy reached a notable milestone June 10 when Delaware Gov. Jack Markell signed legislation that allows families to set up tax-free savings accounts for people with disabilities.

Delaware became the 19th state to create an Achieving a Better Life Experience program, following a December 2014 federal law making it possible to do so. U.S. Sen. Christopher Coons of Delaware is one of the original co-sponsors of that bill.

Previously, individuals with disabilities couldn't have more than \$2,000 in assets without losing benefits such as Medicaid and Supplemental Security Income.

"I found it odd and hard to believe; \$2,000 is not that much," Carrie said. "I'm sure it was a lot back when it was created, in the 1960s I believe, but that cap has never been adjusted for inflation."

Coons said families of children with disabilities have faced the choice between receiving federal benefits to help care for their child and saving for their child's future for far too long.

"Americans with disabilities deserve every opportunity to build a brighter future and the financial stability to ensure independence and self-determination," he said in a news release on his website.

The Huots have been pushing for the ABLA Act for a couple of years, but Carrie said her good friends, Rick and Amy Kosmalski, have been lobbying for eight years on behalf of their daughter, Kayla, whom Delaware's ABLA Act is named after.

Kayla and the Huots' son, Leo, know each other through the state's Down Syndrome Association, which hosts several awareness events and socials for its members. They include buddy walks at the beach, holiday gatherings and college tailgate parties. Carrie is the southern representative for Delaware's DSA and helped organize a fundraising half-marathon last year in



Master Sgt. Carrie Huot, 712th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron first sergeant, and her son Leopold stand with Delaware Gov. Jack Markell in his office on the day Markell signed the state's Able Act, allowing individuals with disabilities to have a tax-free savings account. (Courtesy photo)

Wilmington.

She said her son doesn't talk much, but he is a fun, outgoing little boy who loves animals, swimming and playing the video game "Super Mario Brothers."

"Tee-go," Leo blurted out as he listened to his mother talk about some of his favorite things.

Tee-go was a reference to his favorite cartoon, "Teen Titans Go," his mom explained.

"He can do everything, but it just takes him a little longer," she said. "When people try to help him with everything, he gets frustrated and says, 'I do it.'"

Leo is the only child in his elementary school with Down syndrome. He completed first grade with the aid of an assistant who walked him to class and helped him when necessary.

Carrie said she and her husband are glad Leo strives for independence, but they realize there are some things that he's going to need help with in the future.

"That's why it was important for us to be there at the bill signing," she said. "It was a big goal, and it was exciting for us to wit-

ness. Later, he'll be able to look at the pictures and know he was a part of it."

About a dozen children with disabilities and their families filled the office where the bill was signed, and Kayla sat in the governor's chair.

Also present at Dover's Legislative Hall for the legislation signing was 512th AW Honorary Commander John Paradee and his brother, Delaware Rep. Trey Paradee, one of the sponsors of Kayla's Bill.

"I am extremely proud of him; he deserves a lot of credit," John said. "As a financial advisor by trade, he especially understood the cause and the huge difference it could make in the lives of families with disabilities in Delaware. It's a very important piece of legislation which will impact so many."

For the Huots, Carrie said it allows them to do the same things for Leo — legally in his name — that they do for his older and younger brothers.

"And who doesn't want to put \$10 a month away for their kid?" she said. "Our state's ABLA Act now gives Leo the same opportunities as any other kid."

(Aceveda is assigned to the 512th AW public affairs office at Dover AFB.)

# OPERATION RECONNECT

## Reservist starts nonprofit to provide vacations for military members

By Tech. Sgt. Emily Alley

A passing comment by a fellow Reservist led an assistant A-10 Thunderbolt II crew chief to leave his civilian job, move approximately 1,000 miles away and start a non-profit company designed to improve the quality of life for military members and their families.

Senior Airman Ryan Charrier, a member of the 442nd Fighter Wing at Whiteman Air Force Base, Missouri, was deployed to Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan, in 2014 when one of his co-workers, Tech. Sgt. Ken Campbell, mentioned that he'd been in the Air Force 28 years and had never been on a vacation.

"When you're married and take a trip, it's usually a question of who you'll visit," Campbell said. "That's not a vacation. That's not relaxing."

Charrier, who knew several families with beach houses along the Gulf Coast, made some phone calls from Afghanistan and found a beach house in Gulf Shores, Alabama, that the Campbells could use for free for a week after returning from the deployment.

"His idea was that the minute we drive in until seven days later, it would be stress-free," Campbell said. "When you've deployed for six months, it's hard to bring everything together. What does your wife want to do? What do your kids want to do? If you stay home, she'll work, and they'll have soccer practice. I probably would have mowed the grass. A vacation was a new environment for everyone, and we could relax together."

When the Campbells arrived in Gulf Shores, they were greeted

by a welcome banner. The staff of the company that manages the property threw them a party. Everyone applauded as they walked in. They were given a welcome basket with gift certificates, toys for the kids and tickets to events, including a dolphin cruise.

"We were up every morning to watch the sunrise," Campbell said. "When we walked out the back door, we were standing in sugar-white sand."

Campbell's wife found Charrier a few months later at the wing's Christmas party to thank him.

"After talking for a minute or two, my wife was in tears," Campbell said.

"At that moment, I knew that was my purpose in life," Charrier said.

He scaled up the operation, formed a nonprofit organization that he called Operation ReConnect and started a Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/operationreconnectgulfcoast](http://www.facebook.com/operationreconnectgulfcoast)) to match military members who have deployed with property owners willing to share their accommodations. Charrier calls it a gift of time that allows a family to reconnect after a deployment.

Without even actively soliciting properties, owners found him, and Charrier was able to assemble \$300,000 worth of rental time. His Facebook page also caught the attention of a lawyer, whose firm offered thousands of dollars of pro bono legal work that helped in securing his nonprofit status.

"I'm a big believer in doing what you love," Charrier said. "So I jumped in."

"Jumping in" involved leaving his former civilian job and moving from Missouri to Gulf Shores. Despite the promising future of Operation ReConnect, Charrier has no plans to leave the 442nd FW.

"This summer was the launch," said Staff Sgt. Zach Southard, a lead crew chief at the wing and Operation ReConnect's civilian vice president of internal affairs. "By the end of the summer, we'll know what we can do."

As of the middle of June, Charrier said Operation ReConnect had been able to serve six families. Although he has focused his efforts in the Gulf Shores area, Charrier has been able to secure properties in other locations, including Panama City and Cocoa Beach, Florida; and Tahoe, Utah. He was even offered the use of a duck hunting place in Louisiana.

"Ultimately, I would like to provide the option of beach or hunting/camping ReConnect trips," Charrier said.

"Every property we've been offered to date has come from word of mouth," he said. "However, we plan to start marketing directly to property owners later this summer."

If he's successful, Charrier plans to hire veterans and their families to join his staff. As of early June, he was in the process of building an online application process (located at [www.operationreconnect.org](http://www.operationreconnect.org)) that will allow veterans to submit Defense Department Forms 214 to request a vacation and begin to fill the rental properties for the fall. Families can also get in touch with him via email at [oprorg@gmail.com](mailto:oprorg@gmail.com).

The program is open to members of all branches of the military,

regardless of rank, who have deployed since the terrorist attacks of 9/11. Charrier said priority goes to those who have most recently returned home from a deployment.

He said his goal is to be able to serve 300 families this year and that he wants to increase the number to 1,000 military families annually.

"Based on my experiences, I do not see inventory of available properties being a huge concern," Charrier said. "On the 32 miles of beaches in Alabama, we have more than 22,000 condominium units. While I will never have access to all of these properties, I feel comfortable in meeting my goal."

Charrier said businesses along the Alabama Gulf Coast have opened their doors and "rolled out the red carpet" for Operation ReConnect.

"For example, the world-famous Flora-Bama Lounge & Oyster Bar located in Perdido Key near the Alabama/ Florida state line asked us to join their fishing rodeo with the proceeds coming back to Operation ReConnect," he said. "Our plans for the future are to continue building the foundation of the organization. We are currently in the process of writing grant applications, setting up fundraisers and growing our property owner network."

(Alley is assigned to the 442nd FW public affairs office at Whiteman AFB. Cliff Tyler, Citizen Airman magazine editor, also contributed to this article.)





**Tiny House.**  
**Big Adventure.**

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