



# ONE-STOP SHOP



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## From the Top

By Lt. Gen. Charles E. Stenner Jr.  
Commander, Air Force Reserve Command



## Chief's View

By Chief Master Sgt. Dwight Badgett  
Command Chief Master Sergeant,  
Air Force Reserve Command

### Command making progress toward achieving full operational capability

**T**wo years ago, Air Force Reserve Command embarked on a journey that will ultimately lead to achieving full operational capability.

This journey involves a series of projects, collectively called AFR 2012, that are designed to make it easier for Reservists to volunteer, mobilize and deploy, while at the same time fulfilling all of our combat and support requirements. These initiatives will also improve our ability to manage people and resources, track unit availability and operations tempo, and provide better predictability for individual Reservists, families and civilian employers.

Although AFR 2012 represents some fundamental changes in the way we go about satisfying requirements, one thing remains constant: We continue to perform all of our many different missions with the same level of pride, dedication and professionalism we've

always demonstrated. However, we're doing them in a more efficient, cost-effective manner.

The most significant change under the AFR 2012 umbrella is our new Force Generation Center. This organization, located at Robins Air Force Base, Ga., serves as a one-stop shop for providing Reserve manpower as well as resources to meet any requirement, from man-day support to exercises of any kind to wartime contingency operations. The goal of the FGC is to make it easier for everyone seeking Reserve support to get exactly what they need when they need it — each and every time.

Since it became operational in October 2010, under the leadership of Brig. Gen. William Binger, the FGC has made remarkable progress toward achieving its goal. It has successfully responded to several real-world requests for Reserve support, and our "customers" are getting used to this new way of doing business.

This month's issue includes a complete update on the FGC, which begins on Page 14. I invite you to take a look to see an outstanding example of how, in today's joint operational environment, AFRC is evolving to meet an increasing array of requirements from a wide variety of sources. ★

### AFRC: An equal partner ready to take on any challenge

**W**hile I have traveled around the command over the last 12 months, you have shown me that the Air Force Reserve Command is truly an equal partner in our U.S. Air Force.

Flying on special operations missions, observing low-level air drops, admiring the receiving end of an aerial refueling and witnessing the skill of our aerial porters competing to be the best has allowed me to gain a new respect for your talents. You have impressed senior leaders around the Department of Defense as you fly, train, evaluate, test, deploy and fight. In addition, I am impressed by your care and compassion as you accomplish the critical mission of the dignified transfer of our fallen heroes. The amazing Airmen performing these missions are all proud Citizen Airmen assigned to AFRC.

But you have not rested on your accomplishments. We will excel in new and expanded mission areas like remotely piloted aircraft, space operations and maintenance, training, rescue operations, and intelligence. As we move into these

new and exciting missions, I know you will attack them with the same enthusiasm and professionalism that you have demonstrated over the past 43 years.

AFR 2012 is more than just a good idea. It is a new and better way of doing business. We all know that we live in a time when financial concerns have become a matter of national security. These improvements will allow you to do your jobs better but also be more cost-effective as you do them.

As we move forward with AFR 2012, you will continue to show the world that you can take on any challenge. And the improvements in how we do business will help you do them more efficiently. You are truly the best, and your performance at home station, during exercises and especially while deployed in a contingency environment prove that you are at the front of every mission our nation asks you to perform. ★



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On the front cover: (Top) Although it has only been in business for about eight months, the new Force Generation Center is already taking center stage as Air Force Reserve Command's one-stop shop for generating Reserve forces and executing the mission. See the story, Page 14. (Bottom left) Few people in the Air Force have been as closely tied throughout their career to one specific aircraft as Senior Master Sgt. Bill Gross. Read about the man and his machine on Page 24. (Bottom right) Where's the beef? Within Air Force Reserve Command, it's everywhere. Read about the command's Prime Base Engineer Emergency Force teams on Page 18.

**Gen. Norton A. Schwartz** *Chief of Staff, United States Air Force*

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## UNDERWATER AIRMAN

A pararescueman from the Air Force Reserve's 920th Rescue Wing, Patrick Air Force Base, Fla., conducts underwater search and rescue training in Key West.

Professionals from the 920th recently dove into some high-tech sonar training at the Florida State University campus in Panama City (see story, Page 9). The sonar technology will allow the wing to increase its efficiency by using less time and manpower on underwater search-and-rescue missions.

RESERVE  
SNAPSHOT

Reservists from the 940th Security Forces Squadron, Beale Air Force Base, Calif., work together to count rounds on a belt of ammunition for use in weapons training during a recent unit training assembly. (Tech. Sgt. Kenneth McCann)



First Lt. Sarah Morrison, a Reserve pilot with the 731st Airlift Squadron at Peterson Air Force Base, Colo., shows Girl Scouts Megan Walker (left) and Sabrina Tirrill her sash from when she was a Brownie. Six Girl Scouts from Troop 3008 in Castle Rock, Colo., visited the base to tour a C-130H aircraft and the 731st. The girls chose the squadron as "Hometown Heroes" and brought boxes of cookies with them. (Tech. Sgt. Daniel Butterfield)

Maj. Vincent Chiappone (left) and Maj. Michael Dailey, dentists with the 940th Aerospace Medicine Squadron, Beale Air Force Base, Calif., treat young patients at a clinic in a village in Belize recently. The two Reservists were members of a team of Air Force medical professionals in Belize for the 2011 Medical Readiness Training Exercise. The annual exercise brings humanitarian care and free medical assistance to citizens of the host country.



Staff Sgt. Taylor Myers checks a magnet for metal fragments during a "thru-flight" inspection on an F-16C at Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base Fort Worth, Texas. The magnet, located on the bottom portion of the plane's engine, is designed to attract metal fragments, which would be an indication of excessive wear and tear on the aircraft's power plant. Sergeant Myers is a crew chief in the 301st Aircraft Maintenance Squadron and was supporting a "surge" exercise to help prepare the Air Force Reserve's 301st Fighter Wing for an upcoming inspection. In one day, the 301st Maintenance Group generated 38 sorties, which were flown by pilots from the wing's 457th Fighter Squadron. (Lt. Col. David Kurle)



# Round the Reserve

A brief look at what's happening throughout Air Force Reserve Command

## Barksdale Airmen Fly Milestone Mission

Air Force Reserve and regular Air Force Airmen at Barksdale Air Force Base, La., braved rain, hail and lightning to achieve a first in the base's new B-52 mission.

Despite relentless challenges posed by the weather, operations and maintenance personnel from the 2nd Bomb Wing, 343rd Bomb Squadron and 707th Maintenance Squadron persevered to complete a four-hour B-52 sortie March 5, marking a significant milestone in the total force relationship at Barksdale.

"This is the first time regular Air Force Airmen and Reservists combined to generate a B-52 sortie on a unit training assembly weekend," said Capt. Chris Robinson, 343rd BS co-pilot. "It is a truly blended effort."

The 343rd BS and 707th MXS are classic associate Air Force Reserve squadrons assigned to the 2nd BW.

In layman's terms, under the classic associate setup, the 2nd BW owns the B-52s and equipment, while the Reservists supply people to fly and support the mission alongside regular Air Force Airmen. This sharing of resources through total force integration reduces duplication of effort as

well as the number of people needed to accomplish a task.

"Right now, with the help of our maintainers and Reservists, we can put together a 50/50 mix to support the flying," said Col. John Vitacca, 2nd BW Operations Group commander. "The 343rd BS is a fully integrated squadron within the ops group and wing (2nd BW)."

While aircrew members of sortie "Skull 61," all Reservists assigned to the 343rd BS, assembled at their squadron for a pre-flight briefing, maintenance professionals from the 707th MXS and 2nd BW battled the weather to get the Stratofortress ready for the mission.

The crew flew the B-52 over West Texas and simulated the launch of nuclear cruise missiles. They met up with a KC-135 Stratotanker to give the pilot and co-pilot in-air refueling practice. From there, the crew turned the B-52 north for Smokey Hill bombing range near Salina, Kan. Once there, they practiced the simulated release of nuclear gravity bombs while evading surface-to-air radar-guided missile tracks.

The varied mission allowed everyone, including the navigator and electronic warfare officer, to get into the action, said Maj. Jimmy Jackson, 343rd BS flight commander.

"In the military, we often refer to an occasion as historic. I'm not sure this will be remembered as a historically significant event, but it is an extremely important sortie," said Lt. Col. Jeff Stogsdill, 343rd BS commander. "If it isn't recorded into a history book, that's OK, because we know it as a crucial step in the classic integration of the 343rd BS into the 2nd BW." (Master Sgt. Greg Steele, 307th BW public affairs)

## Pope's Puns



CARTOON BY W.C. POPE

## Volunteer works to highlight global water relief efforts

By Staff Sgt. Nicole Celestine

Many Americans take water resources for granted. They don't realize the value of water until it's unavailable. However, there are a number of communities around the world without regular access, or with no access, to drinkable water.

This reality hit home for a C-17 Globemaster III loadmaster from the 728th Airlift Squadron at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash., who volunteered to highlight and help the global water relief efforts currently taking place in Nicaragua.

"It's always rewarding to pursue something you're passionate about," said Staff Sgt. Jon Polka.

"This is especially good if it benefits other people somehow and broadens your horizons. Carrying our spirit of service and volunteerism beyond our military commitments can be very rewarding to all parties involved."

Last August, Sergeant Polka spent three weeks as a volunteer photographer for Blue Planet Network, a San Francisco-based organization that raises funds for non-governmental organizations dealing with the world water crisis. The Seattle University student's photographs made it possible for organizations, donors and interested third parties around the world to view project details and access interviews with beneficiaries.

"I worked with Para La Vida and El Porvenir, two non-governmental organizations that deliver clean drinking water to communities that lack access," Sergeant Polka said. "The people were very gracious, showing me their projects, which often took long off-road drives with hiking and/or horseback riding to get there. The Agua Para La Vida folks took care of all my logistical



STAFF SGT. JON POLKA

Nicaragua residents have access to clean drinking water thanks to relief efforts provided by non-governmental organizations like El Provenir and Agua Para Vida. Last year, Staff Sgt. Jon Polka of the 728th Airlift Squadron volunteered to help with the global water relief efforts taking place in Nicaragua.

728th AS loadmaster resource manager, who is Sergeant Polka's supervisor. "I am especially impressed when stepping outside those boundaries leads to a better understanding of other people and cultures."

Sergeant Polka said volunteering reinforced his ability to adapt to different situations, a skill he said he will be applying toward future assignments that fall outside basic aircrew operations. He recommends pursuing opportunities that broaden horizons because they influence what activities a person will participate in.

"As a Reservist, when you are operating in a military capacity, you know the mission comes first, and you must do certain things to make sure that happens," Sergeant Polka said. "Similarly, volunteering forced me to go beyond myself and try to do justice to what I was seeing and experiencing." ★

(Sergeant Celestine is assigned to the 446th Airlift Wing public affairs office at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash.)

needs and even threw me a party before I left."

Sergeant Polka, a photography major, said he wanted to gain experience working with non-governmental organizations overseas and contribute toward the relief effort. Through volunteering, he was able to satisfy his love for traveling and meeting people from communities that are not typical tourist hot spots. Brushing up on his Spanish through the Nicaraguan culture was a bonus.

"I take notice when people take a step outside the comfortable boundaries we often set for ourselves," said Senior Master Sgt. Rich Lutz,

## Sonar Training to Aid in Rescue Operations

Three members of the 308th Rescue Squadron at Patrick Air Force Base, Fla., dove into some high-tech sonar training March 21-25 at the Florida State University campus in Panama City, Fla.

Master Sgt. Christopher Seinkner and Staff Sgt. Daniel Warren, pararescue jumpers from the 308th, and Barry Burgess, master diver for the squadron, attended hands-on training on using sonar technology. Members of the FSU Underwater Crime Scene Investigation Department taught the course.

Mr. Burgess said the training is important because when properly used, sonar technology can enhance the squadron's main missions: search, rescue and recovery.

"Most underwater searches are conducted in areas with little to no visibility and can reach depths that reduce time on the bottom due to decompression sickness or available air limitations," said Mr. Burgess, a retired Navy chief petty officer. "The handheld sonar system can greatly reduce the time, personnel and equipment needed to search large areas underwater."

The type of sonar used in the training is called a dual-frequency identification sonar diver-held unit, or DIDSON-DH.

The handheld device is connected to a pair of goggles that attach to the diver's face mask. The unit relays a three-dimensional image with a range up to 100 feet underwater. It allows divers greater access to search areas regardless of limited visibility and darkness.

"The DIDSON truly is a revolutionary system that will dramatically increase the efficiency in which recovery teams search for sensitive materials and missing personnel," Sergeant Warren said.

Although very beneficial, the five-day sonar training does have its challenges. Mr. Burgess said learning and mastering the new system, including how to interpret the sonar images, can be difficult.

"Add in cold water, current and low visibility and you have a very challenging situation," he said.

The training consisted of one day of classroom work to learn the basics of the sonar system, one day of equipment familiarization in a pool, two days of operational training in open water, and one day to clean and conduct maintenance on system equipment. Mr. Burgess said Sergeants Seinkner and Warren will share their newfound knowledge with other members of the squadron. Using sonar systems will be yet another skill pararescue jumpers and combat rescue officers can add to their already long list of capabilities.

"The 308th Rescue Squadron PJs stand ready at any time to conduct underwater search and recovery operations for anything from a dropped weapon to a drowning victim to a Humvee," Mr. Burgess said. "This sonar system will greatly enhance the ability to perform this mission." (Staff Sgt. Anna-Marie Wyant, 920th RQW public affairs)

## DOD Authorizes Medal for Haiti Relief Efforts

The Department of Defense has approved the Armed Forces Service Medal for military members assigned to Operation Unified Response who participated in humanitarian relief assistance to the people of Haiti after a 7.0 earthquake Jan. 12, 2010.

People who supported Operation Unified Response between Jan. 14 and June 1 must have been assigned to the immediate area of operation.

Members must provide source documents confirming AFSM entitlements to their unit commander or designated representative. Source documents include temporary duty orders, travel vouchers, decoration citations, performance reports, etc. Documents must show the operation being supported, location and duration of service in the qualifying area.

For more information, visit the Air Force personnel services website at <https://gum.afpc.randolph.af.mil/> or call the Total Force Service Center at 1-800-525-0102. (Air Force Personnel, Services and Manpower public affairs, Randolph Air Force Base, Texas)

## Guidance Clarifies Wear of Fleece Jacket

The Air Force Office of Manpower, Personnel and Services, or AF/A1, at the Pentagon has issued guid-

ance regarding wear of the authorized sage-green fleece outer garment.

According to the guidance, "The sage-green fleece jacket, commonly known as Generation III or Gen III, was the original version authorized for wear. Due to limited availability at Army and Air Force Exchange Service Military Clothing Stores and through the Defense Supply Center Philadelphia, some units purchased and issued other versions."

The message continues by explaining these other versions may be worn as long as they meet the configuration require-

ments for name tapes and rank. Requirements for wear are the following:

- A Velcro Airman Battle Uniform print last-name tape with dark-blue block lettering, centered between the zipper and sleeve seam on the wearer's right chest.
- A Velcro ABU print U.S. Air Force tape with dark-blue block lettering, adjacent to the name tape and centered between the zipper and sleeve seam on the wearer's left chest.
- A Velcro subdued cloth rank with a solid sage-green background, flush and centered above the last-name tape on the

wearer's right chest.

- The fleece must remain zipped no lower than halfway between the name tape and the collar.
- The collar must be folded over and resting on the shoulder, chest and back when the zipper is not completely zipped.
- The bottom length of the fleece must be as close to the length of the ABU top as possible.
- Sleeves must be worn down at all times.
- The fleece must be kept in a neat,

serviceable and professional appearance at all times.

- The sage-green fleece may only be worn over the ABU top and is not authorized to be worn solely over a T-shirt, thermal underwear or similar undergarments, when worn as an outer garment.

Items authorized for wear with the fleece include black or sage-green leather, suede or knit gloves; black or sage-green watch caps; black scarves that are tucked in; and black ear muffs.

Commanders also have the authority to allow wear of the fleece indoors if mis-

sion needs require it. (Brad Jessmer, Air Force Uniform Office, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio)

## Guard, Reserve Establish Advisory Positions

In an environment where budgets are tight and the demand on the part of the regular Air Force for reserve component capabilities and resources is increasing, teamwork and cooperation are two keys to successfully accomplishing the day-to-day mission.



(Above) Atlanta area Air Force Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps cadets get a great view over the shoulder of a C-130H2 pilot during a short familiarization flight. The 94th Airlift Wing welcomed approximately 1,500 high school Junior ROTC cadets April 12-13 for a look at the wing and an orientation flight. (Below) Tech. Sgt. Dallas Criswell, 94th Operations Support Squadron, leads a group of cadets from the C-130 after their familiarization flight.



## 94th provides Junior ROTC cadets first flight

More than 1,500 Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps cadets experienced their first flight on a military aircraft during the 94th Airlift Wing's annual C-130 orientation flight event April 12-13 at Dobbins Air Reserve Base, Ga.

Reservists, civilians, contractors and youth volunteers worked together to host the event, which also showcased static displays provided by the 94th Security Forces Squadron, the base honor guard, the emergency management office and other support organizations at Dobbins.

"This was a total team effort to execute this event," said Lena Bell, 94th Operations Group administrative assistant and coordinator for the JROTC day. "The high school students who participated were Navy, Air Force, Marines and Army Junior ROTC cadets from the Atlanta metro area."

Youth organizations who volunteered to help with the setup and coordination of the event included the Georgia Army Cadets of America and the Metro Atlanta Young Marines.

"It's great to witness the enthusiasm of the students who visit us during the JROTC flight days," Ms. Bell said. "Their excitement and enjoyment makes the two-day event a pleasure for all of the base agencies that take the time to support the event." (94th Airlift Wing public affairs, Dobbins ARB) ★

## 'Calico Wing' supports Operation Unified Protector

Airmen serving in the 313th Air Expeditionary Wing at an air base in western Europe are from myriad places, but they are "one team."

Those Airmen, and the planes they use for air refueling and airlift during Operation Unified Protector, are not only active duty, but also Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve, making their mission a total force effort. It's an effort that is supporting the international response to the unrest in Libya and enforcement of a United Nations-sanctioned no-fly zone over the country.

Looking out over the flight line at the colors of the aircraft tail flashes, Brig. Gen. Roy Uptegraff, 313th AEW commander, said the ramp looks like a "calico cat."

"Thus, the 'Calico Wing' was born," said Col. Dave Cohen, 313th vice commander.

A photo illustration created by the wing public affairs office highlights the multi-colored tail flashes. It features aircraft from ANG units in Nebraska, Utah, Ohio, Arizona, Tennessee, Illinois, Iowa and Pennsylvania. It also shows Air Force Reserve aircraft from Indiana and North Carolina, and active-duty aircraft from California, Kansas, North Dakota, Washington, Florida and New Jersey.

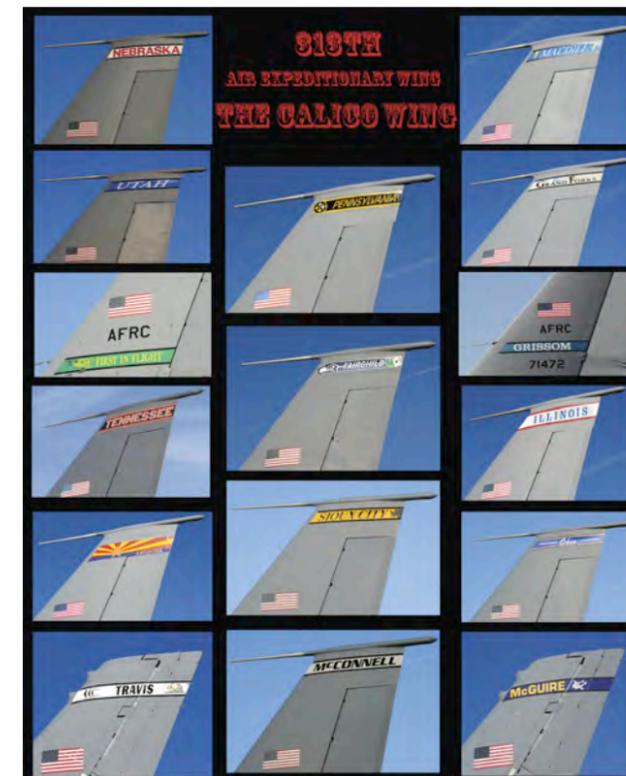
"You can't tell us apart," said Master Sgt. William Buckley, a flight chief from the Reserve's 916th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron at Seymour Johnson Air Force Base, N.C. "We're proud to be able to do any mission the Air Force needs us to do."

The aircraft belonging to the 313th AEW include the KC-135 Stratotanker and KC-10 Extender. Both aircraft help keep the NATO aircraft covering the no-fly zone over Libya constantly refueled through a coordinated aerial refueling campaign.

On any given day, a combination of active-duty, ANG and Reserve aircrew and maintenance Airmen combine to care for and fly the planes on refueling missions. For example, there could be an aircrew from the Reserve flying a tanker owned by the Guard but maintained by active-duty Airmen.

The Calico Wing reflects the Air Force leadership's vision of the total force enterprise.

"The ability to fashion a powerful combination of active, Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve components has been one of our great strengths," Secretary of the Air Force



The 313th Air Expeditionary Wing, which is supporting Operation Unified Protector, is known as the "Calico Wing" because of the multi-colored aircraft tail flashes found on the flight line.

Michael Donley said in a September 2010 speech at the Air Force Association Conference and Technology Exposition in Oxon Hill, Md.

"In mission sets old and new, we'll continue to look for ways to employ total force initiatives when they bring more capacity, capability and efficiency to our Air Force," the secretary said. ★

(Senior Airman David Dobrydney, 313th AEW public affairs, Air Force News and Master Sgt. Scott Sturkol, Air Mobility Command public affairs, contributed to this report.)

## Enthusiast uses comic to benefit Wounded Warrior Project

By Capt. Marnee A.C. Losurdo

A master sergeant at Dover Air Force Base, Del., is using the love he's had for stories of comic book superheroes since he was a child to benefit some real-world heroes of today.

Master Sgt. Eric Sellers of the 512th Aerospace Medicine Squadron assisted in the production of the comic *Pacesetter: The George Perez Magazine*. The publication highlights the career of an American comic book writer and the 30th anniversary of *The New Teen Titans* comic superheroes. Proceeds from the sale of the comic go to the Wounded Warrior Project, a nonprofit organization designed to help injured service members.

"This is my way to give back to those who sacrificed the most," said Sergeant Sellers, who owns thousands of comic books and is an avid fan of Mr. Perez, illustrator of *Wonder Woman* and the *Avengers*. "It was a way for me to use my passion for comics to benefit a cause close to my heart and help real heroes who have sacrificed so much for freedom."

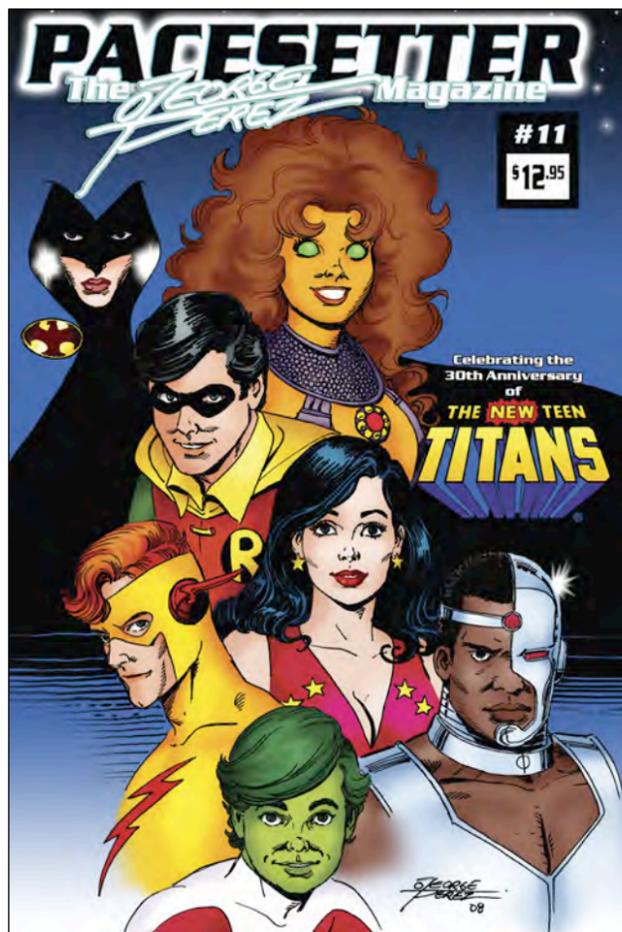
According to the Wounded Warriors Project website, more than 40,000 service members have been injured in Iraq and Afghanistan. In addition, it is estimated that more than 300,000 additional people suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder or depression. The project works to assist these wounded men and women through its various programs and services.

Sergeant Sellers has been associated with the *Pacesetter* for eight years and became involved with the project honoring Mr. Lopez after asking if anything was going to be done for the 30th anniversary of the *New Teen Titans*.

"It was a comic that influenced a generation," the sergeant said.

The *Teen Titans* was originally created in 1964, but the comic became a huge success in the 1980s when Mr. Perez and writer Marv Wolfman revamped the series, relaunching it as the *New Teen Titans*, Sergeant Sellers said. The comic features characters such as Robin, Kid Flash, Cyborg, Changeling, Wonder Girl, Starfire and Raven.

"It's a series that was well written, well drawn, with great characters and great story lines that are still relevant today," Sergeant Sellers said. "I didn't see anything being done to highlight the *New Teen Titans* 30th anniversary, so I approached the *Pacesetter* publisher, Tony Lorenz, and volunteered to put something together."



Master Sgt. Eric Sellers of the 512th Aerospace Medicine Squadron at Dover Air Force Base, Del., assumed a lead role in producing a special comic book to help raise money for the Wounded Warrior Project.

Not only did Sergeant Sellers line up most of the material for the issue, but he financed the printing costs, investing nearly \$3,000 in the project, Mr. Lorenz said. The anniversary issue costs \$10 and can be purchased in comic book stores and online at [www.lulu.com](http://www.lulu.com). ★

(Captain Losurdo is chief of public affairs for the 512th Airlift Wing at Dover AFB.)

With an eye toward improving working relationships, increasing efficiency and determining the best way to provide their organizations' considerable capabilities, the commander of Air Force Reserve Command and director of the Air National Guard established a couple of new advisory positions to work directly for them.

Col. Murray A. Hansen is the new ANG adviser to Lt. Gen. Charles E. Stenner Jr., AFRC commander. And Col. Dave Delgado is serving as the new AFRC

adviser to Lt. Gen. Harry M. Wyatt III, ANG director.

"I am excited to have been selected to fill this new position," Colonel Hansen said. "My hope is to develop this position as added value to the Headquarters AFRC staff and numbered air forces, and to successfully execute Generals Stenner and Wyatt's intent."

Their intent, he said, is to make "a significant impact" in the area of cost savings without sacrificing combat capability.

"Since 9/11, there has been a realiza-

tion and understanding throughout the Department of Defense that the reserve components cannot return to the days when we were postured as strategic reserves," Colonel Hansen said. "We are an integral part of day-to-day military operations around the world, and that is the new reality. The Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve both bring significant combat and support capability to the table, at a fraction of the cost of the active-duty component."

The colonel said he has several pri-

mary duties, including contributing to the development of long-range force structure plans and programs affecting Guard and Reserve units. He participates in the process of making and implementing decisions regarding the beddown of reserve component forces. And Colonel Hansen also assists in managing Guard and Reserve forces to optimize combat capability and advocates the appropriate basing strategy for reserve component associations.

Colonel Hansen said that as with any new position, there are challenges he faces in trying to carry out his duties. Two obvious challenges are the doctrinal differences and work organizational issues that exist between the Guard and Reserve.

"However, if you enter a situation with an open mind and the determination to make truly non-parochial recommendations that are best for the United States of America, then that is the right position to take," he said. "This can be delicate at times, but, as they say, that's what we get paid the 'big bucks' to do — to obtain the most accurate information and make the best recommendations for the right reasons."

Colonel Hansen said he is very optimistic about the future as it relates to the Guard and Reserve working together for the overall good of the Air Force.

"As this relationship develops and matures, it can only help facilitate a mutual respect and understanding that will strengthen efforts to sustain jointly developed business case analysis positions when negotiating future total force integration mission sets with the Air Force," he said. (Staff reports)

## New ID Cards Leave Off Social Security Numbers

As of this month, Social Security numbers on military identification cards will begin to disappear, said Maj. Monica M. Matoush, a Pentagon spokeswoman.

The effort is part of a larger plan to protect service members and other Department of Defense identification card holders from identity theft, officials said.

Currently, the Social Security number is printed on the back of common access cards and on the front of cards issued to dependents and retirees. Beginning this month, when current cards expire, new cards will have a DOD identification number replacing the Social Security number, Major Matoush said.

The DOD identification number is a unique 10-digit number that is assigned to every person with a direct relationship to the department. The new number also will be the service member's Geneva Convention identification number.

An 11-digit DOD benefits number also will appear on the cards of those people eligible for DOD benefits. The first nine digits are common to a sponsor, Major Matoush said, and the last two digits will identify a specific person within the sponsor's family.

The DOD will replace identification cards as they expire. (Jim Garamone, American Forces Press Service) ★

## It's Your Money

By Ralph Lunt

We've been told ...

Measure twice and cut once, because if you are careful and double-check your work, it's less likely you'll make a mistake.

When it comes to investing, you rarely get "do overs." Specifically, if you buy stock, mutual fund or Thrift Savings Plan shares and you don't measure and understand the risk, you may not be able to recover.

Sure, we'd all like an investment that gains 10 percent a year and never loses value, but it is crucial for you to know that investment does not exist! When you make investment decisions, you must understand the risks involved. Investing in stocks and mutual funds is serious business, because they deal with money and, most importantly, time.

Consider this column a reality check on where the financial markets have been and where they stand now. For perspective, on March 9, 2009, the Dow Jones industrial average closed at 6,547, the NASDAQ at 1,268, and the Standard and Poor's 500 at 676. As I write this, around noon on May 6, these indices stand as follows: Dow, 12,755; NASDAQ, 2,849; and S&P, 1,348.

The focus here is both the volatility and resiliency of the stock market. Imagine being newly retired and watching the \$100,000 you allocated to an S&P index fund on Oct. 9, 2007, fall to approximately \$43,000 on March 9, 2009, and, thankfully, go back up to roughly \$86,000 today.

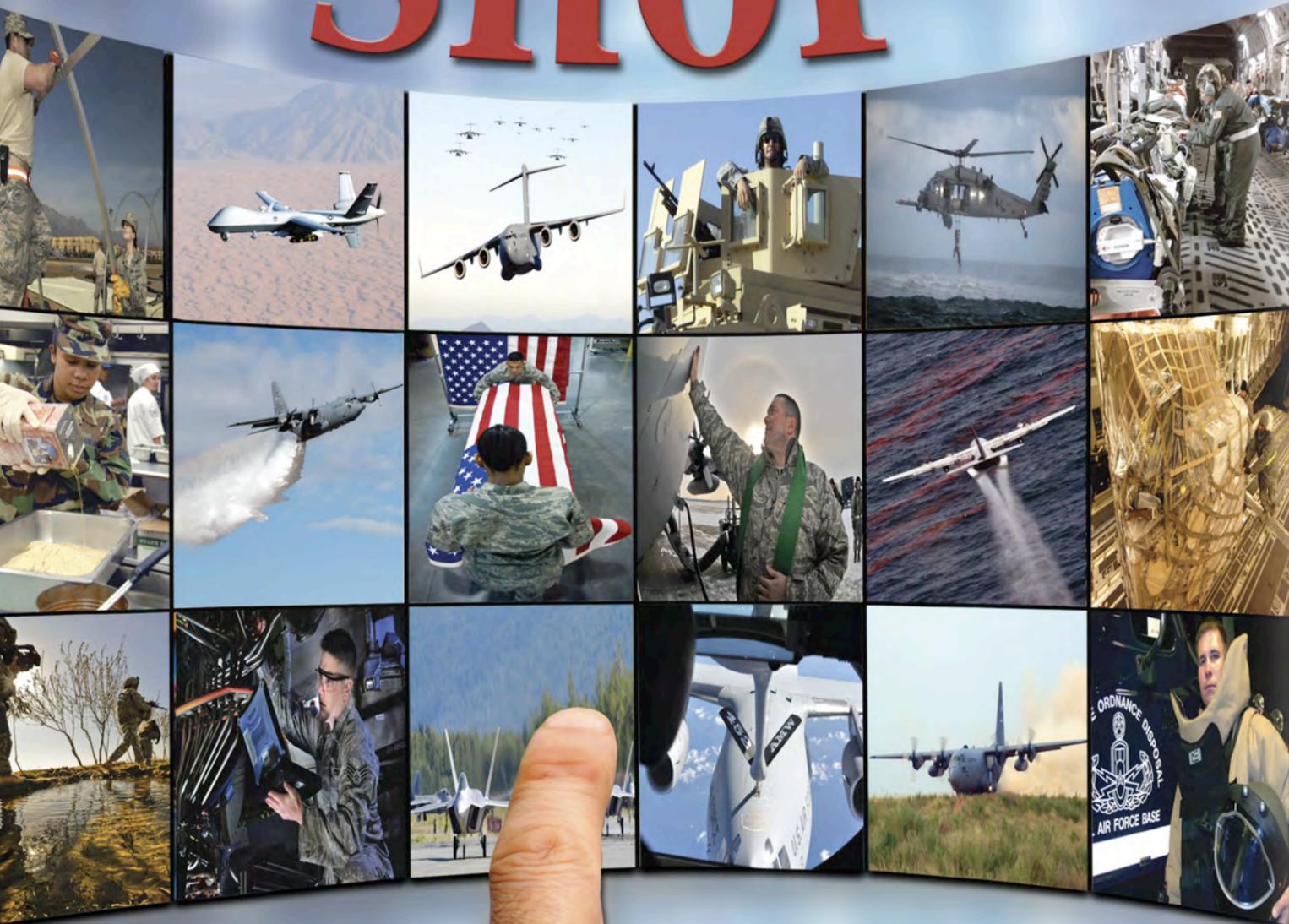
Please don't misunderstand my intent. I'm not calling a market top or making any predictions. I know better. Quite frankly, it's easy to forget just how volatile the financial markets can be. Given the significant recovery in the equity markets, I felt now was a good time to remind investors about the reality of what can happen to real money that is allocated into investments that come with market risk.

Now is the perfect time to take the reality illustrated above and review your portfolio and your investment philosophy. Are you comfortable with your investments as they stand? If not, do what is necessary to make your answer yes. When it comes to significant exposure to financial markets, I suggest we take the advice friend owl gave to Bambi: "It could happen to anyone, so you'd better be careful." ★

(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, Mr. 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 for the Great Lakes region of the Civil Air Patrol adviser's program.)



# ONE-STOP SHOP



**Force Generation Center is well on its way to becoming the single source for generating Air Force Reserve assets**

By Bo Joyner

**A**ir Force Reserve Command's newly established Force Generation Center is not scheduled to reach full operational capability until March 2012, but the organization is already taking center stage as the command's one-stop shop for generating Reserve forces and executing the mission.

On the leading edge of AFRC Commander Lt. Gen. Charles E. Stenner's AFR 2012 initiative, the FGC began initial operations in October and is slated to meet full capability next March. AFR 2012 is a series of projects designed to establish a single organization to access Air Force Reserve capability, streamline the numbered air force management structure, and strengthen Headquarters AFRC expertise in a wide range of new and emerging Air Force missions.

Already tested by military operations in Afghanistan, Iraq, Israel, Japan, Libya and, most recently, Mexico, the center is on speed dial for Air Mobility Command, Air Combat Command and Air Force Special Operations Command — AFRC's three major customers.

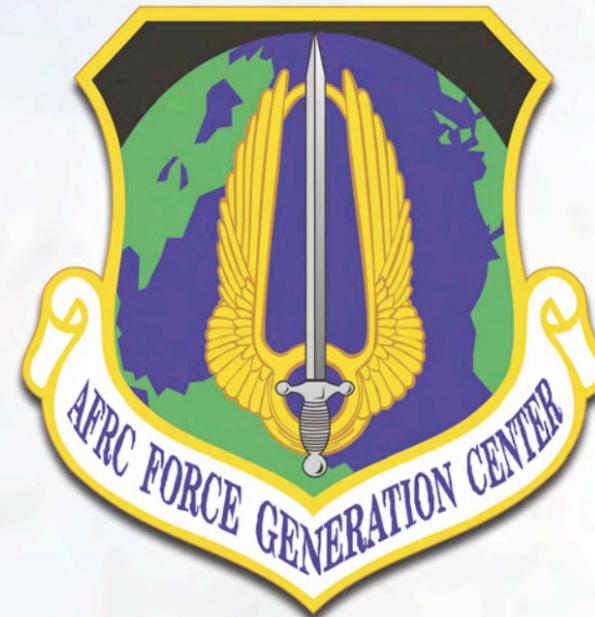
Initial operations began in the FGC last October with the hiring of the command staff and division chiefs followed by the transfer of people and responsibilities from the command's already established air expeditionary forces cell. As with any new organization, the FGC has had its share of growing pains, but Brig. Gen. William "Blaze" Binger, the commander, Col. Dana Marsh, his deputy commander, and their team of dedicated professionals has hit the ground running, tackling the task of hiring the right mix of people from diverse career fields.

General Binger's previous experience as a wing commander makes him eminently qualified to lead this unique organization, and he has selected only seasoned wing and group commanders as his key staff members.

"We're about half manned in our full-time positions right now with about 45 people on board," General Binger said. "We are focused on finding the right people with diverse backgrounds in aviation and expeditionary support, preferably with deployed experience."

Once fully manned, the FGC will have a little more than 100 people, with a mix of civilians, air reserve technicians, members of the active Guard and Reserve, and traditional Reservists.

One example of the FGC's growing pains is the lack of office space. The general's temporary office on the second floor of the



AFRC headquarters building at Robins Air Force Base, Ga., is no exception — it's a bit cramped these days with boxes stacked floor to ceiling with computers and other equipment until additional space opens up to accommodate his expanding staff.

"One of the first things General Stenner told me was, 'Don't break what is already working well,'" General Binger said. "The AEF cell was doing a great job of handling our recurring deployment requirements, but that is only a part of what our Reserve forces do. AFRC receives about 30,000 line requirements per year. We have

great visibility on about 10,000 of those."

The FGC is working hard to get better visibility on all the others so it can reach its goal of becoming the single path to request and receive as well as oversee and deliver AFRC forces and capability, the general said.

General Binger believes communication is one of the keys for the FGC to reach this goal. The primary message that must be communicated to the requesting organizations, he said, is that the FGC exists to make things easier and not to simply add another layer in the process to generate Reserve forces.

"We are here to expedite things and not be an impediment," the general said. "My job is to say yes. If we can support a request without endangering our Reserve volunteerism or overly taxing our career fields, we'll do it; and, using the FGC, we'll do it quickly and more efficiently, and we'll be able to give General Stenner a better overall picture of where his people are and how they are doing."

That philosophy was put to the test in April when hundreds of wildfires were raging across northern Mexico. The Mexican government requested U.S. intervention. The State Department tasked U.S. Northern Command, which, in turn, contacted the FGC for fire suppression support. Within 48 hours of receiving the tasking from the FGC, the 302nd Airlift Wing at Peterson AFB, Colo., was airborne with two of its C-130s equipped with the modular airborne firefighting system. Crews used Laughlin AFB, Texas, to launch missions to quell the fires in the Mexican



STAFF SGT. QUINTON RUSS

**Staff Sgt. Shane Sturgeon fills up the storage tanks of a C-130 Hercules equipped with the modular airborne firefighting system with fire retardant before the aircraft departs Peterson Air Force Base, Colo., April 17 to support efforts to fight wildfires in Mexico and Texas. Sergeant Sturgeon is assigned to the 302nd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron at Peterson. The request for Reserve support to fight the fires came from the Mexican government through the U.S. State Department, then to U.S. Northern Command and finally to Air Force Reserve Command's new Force Generation Center.**

state of Coahuila.

"In this case, the process worked perfectly," General Binger said. "Of course, this request was pretty cut and dried. When we receive a call for aerial firefighting support, we know we're going to look to the 302nd (the only Reserve unit with that capability). Airlift or expeditionary support requirements, for example, would require more of an enterprise-wide solution."

Just two months into initial operations, the FGC received a call to assist with wildfires in Israel. Then came Operation Tomodachi, the tsunami and earthquake relief effort in Japan, closely followed by Operation Odyssey Dawn, which called for the protection of Libyan civilians and authorized the establishment of a no-fly zone over Libya.

One thing General Binger said he learned from these early requests was the need for an around-the-clock presence in the FGC.

"That's why we're establishing what we call the Battle Watch," he said. "It will be manned 24 hours a day, 365 days a year so we can respond immediately to requests."

The Battle Watch is a branch within the Operations Division, one of the four new divisions comprising the FGC. The Ops Division has inherited responsibility for the deployment review board, mission planning and the threat working group, previously tasked to the AFRC Directorate of Operations.

Another completely new organization for the Air Force Reserve and located within the FGC is the Security Cooperation and Exercises Division, which is responsible for keeping track of all Air Force and joint exercise opportunities that are available to Reservists.

"I see this as our long-range division, to monitor all the Reserve-friendly exercises that are out there and to keep track of all of our units' ORIs (operational readiness inspections), UCIs (unit compliance inspections) and AEF rotations," General Binger said. "Again, the idea is to be the one-stop shop for finding the right people to take part in these recurring exercises."

The Forces Division is already robust with the transfer of people from the command's former AEF cell. As the lynch pin of the mobilization process and AEF fills, this division validates and tracks roughly a hundred requirements each week during non-scheduled deployment periods.

When AEF change out gets under way, this work increases by more than tenfold. Every career specialty at the command level has a functional area manager. FAMs are responsible for the management and planning of all personnel and equipment within their specific functional area to support wartime and peacetime contingencies. The command has about 55 active FAMs, but to provide a more comprehensive picture of deploy-

ments and everyday support to the regular Air Force, the Forces Division is hiring 16 functional area representatives who will liaison with the FAMs.

The level of data tracking and analysis to support these three divisions is, without a doubt, complex and intricate, and it requires its own division. On any given day, the Support Division can drill down and track, by specialty code, any one of the thousands of Reservists serving in 50-plus countries around the world.

While General Binger is confident the FGC will achieve its goal of reaching full operational capability by next March, he knows he has his work cut out for him.

"This is a fundamental shift in the way we do business that will require constant education and engagement for a long time," he said. "We'll keep telling our customers and our Reservists that the only thing we are taking away is work load. As a one-stop shop, the FGC will make it easier for everyone to get the exact manpower package to the exact requirement — on time, every time. And, it will help AFRC sustain the high-tempo battle rhythm we've been in for the past 20 years." ★



STAFF SGT. MATTHEW SMITH

**Air Force members unload a pallet from a 60K loader onto a C-17A Globemaster III aircraft at March Air Reserve Base, Calif. The supplies were on their way to Japan for earthquake relief efforts. Reserve support of the earthquake relief efforts was coordinated through the command's new Force Generation Center.**



BO JOYNER

**Brig. Gen. William Binger (standing), the Force Generation Center commander, meets with some key members of his staff: (left to right) Col. Julio Lopez, Forces Division chief; Col. Gordon Elwell, Operations Division chief; Col. Dana Marsh, deputy FGC commander; and Maj. Travis Rowley, executive officer.**

# WHERE'S THE BEEF?



## Within Air Force Reserve Command, it's everywhere

By Gene Vandeventer

**B**ack in 1984, Wendy's introduced its famous "Where's the beef?" advertising campaign in response to a fictional competitor's slogan "Home of the Big Bun." In various television commercials, Wendy's humorously compared the competitor's large hamburger buns that had a miniscule hamburger patty inside to its hamburger featuring a large, thick beef patty perfectly sized to the bun.

"Where's the beef?" was an effective satiric one-liner that emphasized how advertizing proclamations made by Wendy's real-life competitors could be all fluff and no substance.

An Air Force Reserve Command response to the question of "Where's the beef?" would generate thoughts of a far different and more serious nature. It would highlight a long, proud and dedicated history illustrating some of the command's finest men and women serving in the civil engineer squadrons' Prime Base Engineer Emergency Force teams — all substance and no fluff.

So to the question, "Where's the beef," AFRC answers, "It's everywhere!" When it comes to operational and combat support of aircraft, equipment and personnel, it takes superior sustainment support to fly, fight and win. Under the larger umbrella of agile combat support, Prime BEEF teams provide a full range of civil engineering support required to establish, operate, and maintain garrison and contingency air bases.

Prime BEEF forces maintain the necessary equipment and personnel to support bed-down fire emergency services; expedient construction; explosive incident response; emergency management; chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear response; and many other specialized mission duties.

From a historic perspective, the Prime BEEF team concept originated in the 1960s. World events in the 1950s (Korean War) and early 1960s highlighted the need for mobile civil engineer teams to perform wartime duties at airstrips and locations requiring support facilities for aircraft, personnel and equipment. Prime examples of these events include the Lebanon Crisis of 1958, Berlin Airlift in 1961, Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962, 1965 Dominican Republic Crisis and the Vietnam War.

Through AFRC's associations with the regular Air Force, its Prime BEEF units have been extremely active during wartime,



humanitarian and home-station taskings. Whether in an associate partnership with the active-duty Air Force or as a host civil engineer squadron, AFRC Prime BEEF units have proven their worth time and time again through home station accomplishments and the many feats achieved during deployments overseas.

Lt. Col. David Konshok, 419th Civil Engineer Squadron commander at Hill Air Force Base, Utah, recently returned from a Prime BEEF deployment to Afghanistan.

"What a tremendous career and life experience to have served six months on this expeditionary deployment to Bagram with some of the best civil engineers and American patriots in uniform," he said.

Serving as the 577th Expeditionary Prime BEEF Squadron commander, Colonel Konshok tells a story of extreme pride and accomplishment by the AFRC and regular Air Force Prime BEEF members under his command during the tour.

"Our specialized teams of carpenters; electricians; heavy equipment operators; heating, ventilation and air conditioning technicians; and plumbers were instrumental in the maintenance and construction of facilities in support of US military and multi-national coalition troops," the colonel said.

Colonel Konshok spoke of the expeditionary squadrons in the theater, with the 877th supporting northern Afghanistan, the 777th supporting the southern region and the 577th with responsibility for the eastern area. He noted whereas the 877th is an Air National Guard lead element, the 777th is an active duty lead element, while the 577th is an AFRC lead element.

"What an amazing opportunity to command, not just for me, but for AFRC," Colonel Konshok said.

"All three EPBSs have a 'rainbow' mixture of active-duty and air reserve component personnel assigned. ... truly a great example of the total force," he said. "At the 577th, where I commanded, I had elements of all three Air Force components. However, two-thirds were AFRC assets. Joining members from the 419th CES, I was privileged to also command officers and enlisted members from AFRC's 507th CES out of Tinker AFB, Okla., and the 931st CES from McConnell AFB, Kansas. Prior to our tour, our command's CE lead elements at Bagram were from Grissom Air Reserve Base, Ind., and Hickam AFB, Hawaii (the 434th CES and 624th CES, respectively.)"

The 577th EPBS provides direct support to the battle space owner, the U.S. Army's 101st Airborne Division commanding general, who is in charge of all coalition forces in Regional Command-East, Afghanistan. During Colonel Konshok's deployment, the squadron's efforts to improve the quality of life and force protection for forces at Bagram were not confined to the base. It completed more than 60 construction upgrade projects at forward operating bases and combat outposts throughout the region. In addition, the 577th's engineering assistants surveyed and designed more than 300 new projects.

"This was not our usual base maintenance deployment; we were actively working where they needed us most," said Senior Master Sgt. Joseph E. Moulton, 419th CES and deployment chief of the support flight. "When we would arrive at an FOB, we saw our military personnel eating meals outside in the snow or showering with baby wipes. When we left our tour of duty there, our forces were eating out of a dining facility and took hot showers. Just knowing we made our folks' time there a little easier makes the sacrifice of our being away from home and our families easier to handle."

So, "Where's the beef?" Well, within AFRC, it's everywhere ... and a lot of people are better off because of that fact. ★

*(A regular contributor to Citizen Airman magazine, Mr. Vandeventer is assigned to the Expeditionary Combat Support Division of the Installation and Mission Support Directorate, Headquarters AFRC, Robins AFB, Ga.)*



**A**fter spending almost three weeks helping battle wildfires in South and West Texas, members of the 302nd Airlift Wing headed home May 6 to Peterson Air Force Base, Colo.

The Reservists began flying missions April 17 out of Dyess AFB, Texas, in four C-130s equipped with the modular airborne firefighting system. While deployed to support the firefighting effort, the aircraft and Reservists functioned as part of the 302nd Air Expeditionary Group. They were joined by members of the California Air National Guard's 146th AW flying their MAFFS-equipped aircraft.

Under the direction of the Joint Forces Air Component commander for Air Forces Northern at Tyndall AFB, Fla., the two units flew a total of 81 firefighting sorties, dropping 243,000 gallons of fire retardant.

"The men and women who make up the 302nd AEG are extremely proud of the support they provided to the ground crews' firefighting efforts," said Col. Jay Pittman, 302nd AEG commander. "MAFFS enabled significant progress in suppressing the fires, allowing the citizens of Texas to begin recovery."

While the 302nd AW aircraft and people were in Texas performing actual firefighting missions, four other unit aircraft, along with crews and support people, were deployed to Gowen Field in Boise, Idaho, undergoing the U.S. Forest Service's annual MAFFS recertification training. They were joined by aircraft and members of the North Carolina ANG's 145th AW and the Wyoming ANG's 153rd AW.

Under normal circumstances, all eight of the 302nd AW's MAFFS aircraft and the Airmen who fly and maintain them would attend the annual training together. Reservists involved in supporting the fire suppression operations in Texas will be recertified at a later date.

Each of the four MAFFS C-130 wings is required to have a minimum of five certified crews.

"We will continue to stay trained, equipped and ready to render support when tasked in the future," Colonel Pittman said.

This year, all MAFFS-equipped C-130s are using the MAFFS II system in certification training and actual firefighting missions. Different from the legacy MAFFS system, which was used from the early 1970s until 2009, MAFFS II is a self-contained aerial firefighting system that can discharge 3,000 gallons of water or fire retardant in less than five seconds, covering an area one-quarter of a mile long by 60 feet. Once the load is discharged, a MAFFS unit can be refilled in less than 12 minutes.

Training for and flying actual MAFFS drop missions on wildland fires can be extremely challenging and dangerous. It

requires all operators to be highly proficient.

"The Air Force Reserve and the Air National Guard members who are trained to fly the MAFFS mission are our most experienced," Colonel Pittman said.

From Gowen Field, the aircraft's MAFFS systems were loaded with thousands of pounds of water, took off and then followed a lead aircraft across the Idaho plains to make their practice fire retardant drops. Civilian personnel from the Forest Service, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, and the Bureau of Land Management were part of and provided support to the annual recertification week training.

"The MAFFS partnership between land and natural resource management agencies and the military is very important because it provides a way to boost suppression efforts during periods of high wildfire activity," said the 302nd Airlift Wing's Lt. Col. David Condit, who is the director of the Air Force Reserve Command's aerial firefighting program and is the 302nd AEG deputy commander.

From 2000 to 2009, military C-130s with MAFFS systems provided fire suppression support to the U.S. Forest Service by delivering a total of approximately 9.1 million gallons of retardant on wildfires, an average of about 910,000 gallons per year. ★

*(Information for this article taken from stories written by Capt. Corinna Jones of the 302nd AEG public affairs office and Tom Sanders, Air Forces Northern Public Affairs, Tyndall AFB.)*

# IN PLACE, ON TIME AND ON TARGET

## Reserve unit celebrates 10 years of GPS operations

A United Launch Alliance Delta II rocket blasts off with an Air Force global positioning system satellite in August. This was the 48th successful and last in a series of GPS launches on a Delta II rocket, ending an era that began in February 1989. (United Launch Alliance photo by Carleton Bailie)

**C**ircling 12,000 miles above the Earth, the constellation of 35 global positioning system satellites carries out its continuous mission of broadcasting timing and navigation information to billions of users around the world.

From cell phones to bank transactions to internet synchronization, what started out as a means to provide ships and airplanes position data without sextants or maps has integrated into countless facets of everyday life and evolved into one of the greatest soft power programs in American history. And for the past 10 years, Air Force Reserve Command's 19th Space Operations Squadron has been a critical partner in this premier space mission.

The 19th SOPS was established in October 2000 and is part of the 310th Space Wing. In February, the unit formally celebrated its 10th anniversary and reflected on its decade of achievements.

"Most folks don't realize that there are only two units in the entire Department of Defense that operate GPS," said Lt. Col. Damon S. Feltman, squadron commander. "The 19th SOPS is one of them and makes up 41 percent of the total manpower. We aren't just involved in the mission; we are critical to it. The 19th SOPS is the strategic and operational backstop of the nation's GPS capabilities."

The anniversary celebration provided an opportunity for members to reflect on the unit's past and present. All of the unit's past commanders participated in the event, including the first commander and current 10th Air Force vice commander Col. Karen A. Rizzuti.

"I am extremely proud of the contributions (the 19th SOPS) has made over the past 10 years," Colonel Rizzuti said. "I am excited to see what the next decade holds."

Like most space units in AFRC, the 19th is associated with a regular Air Force unit. Air Force Space Command's 2nd SOPS provides the operations center and maintains satellite control authority over the GPS satellite constellation, but daily operations are tightly integrated.

"The 19th SOPS was total force integration before there was such a thing as TFI," Colonel Feltman said. "The mix of crew force, us or the regular Air Force, varies every day. Over the years, we've proven ourselves and built trust to the point where nobody blinks when they see a 19th SOPS member on the ops floor as mission commander or mission chief. The JSTO (Joint Space Tasking Order) says '2nd SOPS' because an ops center has to be identified, but everybody knows its Team Blackjack, the 2nd and 19th together, that's getting the mission done."

The establishment of the 19th SOPS built on the success of

another Reserve unit, the 7th SOPS, which from 1994 to 2001 had the responsibility of performing, among other things, launch, anomaly resolution and disposal operations, known as LADO, for GPS. When 7th SOPS support to GPS is included, AFRC has been part of the last 26 GPS launches.

"We've really carved out a niche for ourselves with launch responsibilities," said Senior Master Sgt. Martin Smith, 19th SOPS operations superintendent. "Last year, when the first GPS-IIF was launched, the 19th SOPS provided 95 percent of the crew force. We've got another IIF launch coming up this year, and it looks like the 19th will provide about the same amount of manpower for this one, too. And we're not just the manpower on launch day, either.

"We provide the bulk of manpower from the time planning meetings and rehearsals begin about six months out until the satellite arrives on station and is declared healthy."

In addition to its LADO responsibility, the 19th was chartered to support five other core tasks: daily GPS operations, training, deployment to alternate operating locations, subject-matter expertise for GPS modernization, and navigation warfare and specialized analysis functions. Some tasks, such as deployments, align well with the classic strategic reserve model. Others, like support to daily operations and NAVWAR, are clear examples of how the squadron, along with AFRC as a whole, has transitioned to an operational status.

According to Maj. Jason King, assistant operations officer, the key to the unit's ability to cover such a wide range of tasks lies with its people.



Members of the 19th Space Operations Squadron monitor the status of a newly launched global positioning system satellite, like the one shown upper right, in 2009. A satellite launch requires the support of almost 1,000 people, from the launch operations specialists at Cape Canaveral, Fla., to the people at Schriever Air Force Base, Colo., waiting to take possession of the craft.



"We're able to do a lot for this mission because of our experience and longevity," Major King said. "We have folks who have been with GPS since before the 19th SOPS was created. Also, a good number of our traditional Reservists work on the industry side of GPS.

"Our depth allows the 19th SOPS to do things made difficult on the RegAF side due to folks coming and going on permanent change-of-station moves every three or four years."

The unit trains to support all its mission tasks, but the level of effort for each varies depending on operational requirements. For example, when the GPS command and control segment transitioned from its legacy software to its current baseline in 2008, 19th SOPS subject-matter experts provided 100 percent of manning for the new operations center for 68 days until operational acceptance and then trained their RegAF counterparts in the 2nd SOPS to operate the new system.

Colonel Feltman said the squadron does not intend to rest on its past decade of achievements. In fact, the unit has enough upcoming mission requirements to keep it busy for the next 10 years and then some.

The unit has 11 GPS-IIF satellites left to launch, followed by the first of 35 GPS Block III satellites beginning in 2014. At the same time, the 19th will assist in the retirement of two ground command and control systems, replacing them with a single system by 2013. Finally, the unit will continue its support to end-users worldwide with its NAVWAR and analysis experts, whose requirements are expected to grow as the GPS user operations center continues to mature. ★

(Information for this article provided by the 19th SOS.)



## Airman shares 30 years of service with first KC-10

By Tech. Sgt. Shawn J. Jones

The first KC-10 Extender delivered to the Air Force, tail number 79-0434, landed at Barksdale Air Force Base, La., March 17, 1981. Four hundred miles away, a young man was busy trying to survive the rigors of basic training, totally unaware that his future career in the military — and, indeed, his life — would be so deeply tied to that aircraft.

For the last 30 years, the KC-10 has successfully provided air refueling and airlift capability for U.S. operations around the globe. Few Airmen serving today are as connected to the KC-10's history as Senior Master Sgt. Bill Gross, a crew chief with the 714th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J. His career has practically marched in lockstep with the aircraft known by the last three digits of its tail number: 434.

"This is a tanker that has served in just about every major military operation in the last 20 years," Sergeant Gross said. "I am proud to have been the crew chief on such a historical and tenured war-fighting machine."

### The early years

Before working on 434, Sergeant Gross served as an active-duty crew chief on a B-52 Stratofortress. Upon completing his

enlistment, he left the Air Force and returned to his hometown in the suburbs of Chicago. However, he quickly realized that his hometown had stayed the same, while he had changed.

"After being responsible for a multi-million dollar aircraft, going back to a childhood job seemed like a dead end," Sergeant Gross said.

Knowing that aircraft maintenance was one of his personal strengths, Sergeant Gross searched for aviation-related career opportunities. He eventually learned that full-time KC-10 crew chiefs were needed in an Air Force Reserve unit at Barksdale AFB. He got the job and unpacked his Air Force uniforms for the first time in more than a year.

Sergeant Gross said the time he spent working as an air reserve technician at Barksdale was special, both personally and professionally. Not only did he raise his two children there, but he also forged many strong relationships with his fellow Airmen.

Time and distance has made it difficult for the sergeant to maintain many of those relationships, but keeping in touch with one of his Barksdale buddies is no problem.

All he has to do is turn to his left, where Chief Master Sgt. Todd Harris sits. Chief Harris, who shares an office with Sergeant Gross, said he clearly recalls the sergeant's work ethic

and dedication as a young noncommissioned officer.

"He took it to another level," the chief said. "If you were going to be working on his aircraft, you had better keep it clean and do proper maintenance, or, believe me, you would hear about it."

That level of dedication almost killed Sergeant Gross.

While working on 434 one day, he was informed of a storm that was quickly approaching Barksdale. The tanker was opened up, exposing some of its critical components to the elements. Sergeant Gross rushed to protect the jet but took just a little too long.

"This big boom happened, and the next thing I knew, I was in the back of a maintenance truck being taken to the emergency room," he recalled.

Lightning had struck the aircraft and surged through the crew chief's body, knocking him off his feet.

"Everyone always says that 434 and I are bonded for life because we got struck by lightning together," he said. However, he was quick to point out that "it's not an experience I'd want to relive."

### Going to war

Sergeant Gross recounted that just as he was reaching his prime as a hands-on crew chief in the late '80s, the KC-10 was reaching its prime as an operational asset for U.S. military operations.

Senior Master Sgt. Bill Gross poses in front of KC-10 tail number 79-0434 on the flight line at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., recently. At left, then-Tech. Sgt. Gross poses in front of the same KC-10 at Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii, in 1991.

Their timing couldn't have been much better, because tensions were escalating in the Persian Gulf region with the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. The Airman and the aircraft were given an opportunity to prove their capabilities in combat operations.

While many of the accolades for the successes achieved during the initial stages of Operation Desert Shield go to F-15 fighter jets, Sergeant Gross said the fighters, with their limited fuel capacity, could not have been in the fight without the support of their tankers.

"How do you think they got there?" he asked.

### Not quite the Jersey Shore, but close

After Iraq's military had been subdued during Operation Desert Storm, the KC-10s continued to rotate in and out of Southwest Asia in support of operations Northern Watch and Southern Watch. However, things were changing back home. The balance of the stateside fleet was leaving Barksdale AFB for Travis AFB, Calif., and McGuire AFB, N.J.

The reorganization had a significant impact on Airmen at Barksdale, many of whom were lifelong Louisiana residents. The Airmen were given a choice to either follow the KC-10s to their new bases or remain to work on B-52s, which were coming in to replace the refueling aircraft. For Sergeant Gross, the choice presented a dilemma.

If he stayed at Barksdale, he knew he would be a valuable asset due to his experience as a former B-52 crew chief. On the other hand, moving to the Garden State had a couple of advantages. Since so many of his fellow unit members decided to remain at Barksdale, transferring to McGuire AFB would provide more promotion opportunities with much less experienced competition. In addition, Sergeant Gross had grown attached to his airplane and wasn't ready to bid it farewell.

"It would have been hard," he said.

On Oct. 1, 1994, aircraft 434 was the first KC-10 to be transferred to McGuire AFB. Sergeant Gross was part of the crew that flew the tanker to its new home that day.

Aircraft 434 wasn't the first in everything it did. Sergeant Gross said in one particular case, the aircraft was last. Air Mobility Command officials decided the fleet of KC-10s would get a new look, with the white-top paint scheme being abandoned in favor of an all-grey scheme. Sergeant Gross thought 434 was fine just the way it was, and he didn't really support the change.

He said he kept finding good excuses to keep the tanker out of the paint barn, and the strategy worked for a little while. However, he knew it was only a matter of time before the painters caught up with him.

"I told them they might paint it grey, but it would have a big white X on top where I would lay while trying to stop them," Sergeant Gross said.

They ended up painting it while he was on leave, he said.

### Still fighting

The KC-10 and its maintenance and operations personnel continued to support ongoing operations in Southwest Asia throughout the '90s, and just as the millennium was about to come to a close, Eastern Europe erupted in violence. Sergeant Gross and 434 were called upon to serve their country overseas once again in support of Operation Allied Force. During the operation, 434 demonstrated its versatility by providing aerial refueling on several missions and also shuttling refugees from harm's way in Kosovo to safety in the United States.

As the new millennium arrived, the KC-10's services were still in high demand. After the terrorist attacks on 9/11, Sergeant Gross and his tanker deployed in support of multiple operations throughout Southwest Asia.

### Prying the wrench from his grip

Though Sergeant Gross and 434 had been brothers-in-arms for many years, job promotions would eventually take him away from his role as the tanker's primary caretaker. He became a production superintendent, meaning the sergeant was the

shift leader who cruised the flight line in a pickup truck while coordinating all of the squadron's on-aircraft maintenance activities. His duties kept him close to the aircraft and to the Airmen who replaced him, but he missed doing the job himself.

"My co-workers always tell me it's time to move on," he said. "But I'm a wrench turner at heart."

Sergeant Gross said it took some effort to not give special attention to 434 and instead focus on the maintenance status of all the KC-10s equally. Occasionally, he'd still jump out of his truck for a few minutes to lend a hand and a word of advice to the Airmen who were working on his jet.

"He tries very hard to share his knowledge and experiences with the young Airmen and pass on his pride of the KC-10," Chief Harris said. "When he hears maintainers referring to 434 on the radio, he often chimes in with a sometimes-unconventional suggestion that reflects one of the aircraft's quirks."

His next promotion would take Sergeant Gross away from 434 and the flight line altogether and into his current position as a desk-bound flight chief. Initially, the new job was tough because he no longer works on aircraft — he works on Airmen.

He didn't start to feel comfortable in the flight chief position until he was advised to think of personnel and administrative issues like aircraft maintenance issues.

Sergeant Gross has since warmed to the position, but Chief Harris knows his old friend would trade in his keyboard for a wrench in a heartbeat.

"To this day, 434 is the No. 1 thing on his mind," the chief said. "When anyone mentions 434, his ears perk up."

Sergeant Gross doesn't deny the chief's statement.

"I still have a personal dedication to the aircraft," he said.

### Retirement on the horizon

Aircraft 434, like most KC-10s, is projected to continue serving the Air Force through 2043. Sergeant Gross, however, has just a few years of service left before reaching his mandatory retirement date.

"There will never be another KC-10 crew chief who takes more pride in his aircraft than Sergeant Gross," Chief Harris said. "It will be a sad day for the Air Force and the KC-10 when he finally hangs up his uniform for the last time."

Sergeant Gross acknowledges his connection to 434, but insists that many other Airmen have helped keep the tanker in a mission-ready state through its 30 years of service.

"That aircraft has a lot of history," he said. "A lot of people have worked on it and bled on it."

Though the next generation of Airmen will continue to work and bleed on 434, none will be able to claim a career that is so deeply linked to one airplane like Sergeant Gross.

"One day, I hope to take my grandchildren to a museum or a base where they will eventually retire 434 upon a block of concrete, dedicating it forever as the first KC-10 delivered to the Air Force," Sergeant Gross said. "And maybe, just maybe, some historian will put my name in the crew chief block, and I can say to them that I was the crew chief for that airplane." ★

(Sergeant Jones is assigned to the 514th Air Mobility Wing public affairs office at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst.)



Airmen tow a C-118 Liftmaster from its position as a static display near the passenger terminal at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., Oct. 23, 2009. The aircraft is being resurfaced with environmentally friendly paints and will be put back on display by the end of summer.

Sparks fly inside an aircraft hangar near the flight line as regular Air Force and Air Force Reserve maintenance technicians work to restore an air mobility artifact.

For decades, a C-118 Liftmaster stood on display near the passenger terminal at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J. In October 2009, the aircraft was towed to a maintenance hangar so Airmen could restore the deteriorating aircraft to its former glory.

Since the restoration project began, Airmen and volunteers have contributed more than 3,000 hours, including nearly 750 hours of off-duty personal time, working to get the Liftmaster back to its position as the sentry of the passenger terminal.

Members of the 1611th Air Transport Wing at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst flew Liftmaster airplanes during the 1950s and '60s. As the first cargo plane assigned to what was then known as McGuire Air Force Base, the long-range, piston-powered transport aircraft helped define the base's role as a mobility gateway.

Working on older aircraft can be challenging. Maintenance technicians who typically work on the base's KC-10 Extenders or C-17 Globemaster IIIs, some of which are just a few years old, found themselves plying their trade on an aircraft that had its heyday in the middle of the 20th century.

On this day in early March, Tech. Sgts. Joseph Martinek and Jared Jones of the regular Air Force 305th Maintenance Squadron were the primary sources of the flying sparks as they spent the morning grinding and cutting out remnants of the mount that held the aircraft to its spot on the static display. Sergeant Martinek said he appreciated being able to work on an aircraft that was flown and maintained by Airmen of previous generations, but the restoration project was no easy task.



Airman 1st Class Marco Andrade, 305th Maintenance Squadron, removes corrosion from a C-118 Liftmaster in an aircraft maintenance hangar. The C-118 is being restored by active-duty Airmen, Reserve Airmen and civilians in an effort to return the aircraft to its position as a static display.

"It's not something you get to do all the time," he said. "Most people in the Air Force don't realize the amount of work that goes into these old birds."

While Liftmasters are an important part of McGuire AFB's history, one Airman appreciated this particular plane's individual history. After serving a tour in Germany, Army Sgt. Elvis Presley returned to the United States aboard the aircraft, amid much fanfare, 51 years ago.

"I'm from Memphis," said Airman First Class Marco

Andrade, a metals technology technician with the 305th MXS. "Everything there is about Elvis. My grandmother loves Elvis."

Not only did the restoration project provide a personal connection to Airman Andrade's hometown, but he said it also provided a learning experience. Modern aircraft structures are typically built from carbon fiber, while the structures of the C-118 are made from simple fiberglass and aluminum.

"I can't thank enough all those who have busted knuckles on this project and put in much of their own valuable time and sweat equity to get us to this point," said Senior Master Sgt. Christopher Hofrichter, a member of the Reserve's 514th Maintenance Group and project manager for the restoration. "What the sheet metal guys have done is nothing short of miraculous."

Sergeant Hofrichter said static displays of historical aircraft help future generations of Airmen become more familiar with the legacy upon which their time in uniform is built.

"From the outset, this project seemed a pretty daunting endeavor, but now that the painting has started, I'm beginning to see some light at the end of the tunnel," he said. "We're optimistic about a late-summer return-to-display date." ★

(Sergeant Jones is assigned to the 514th Air Mobility Wing public affairs office at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst.)

# ON TRACK

**Development teams help ensure Reservists stay on the right career path to meet their goals**

**By Gene Vandevanter**



**F**or four cold days in January, a team of senior leaders within the civil engineer career field representing all Air Force Reserve programs met to evaluate from a mentoring, coaching and developmental perspective more than 300 CE officers.

The purpose of the CE officer development team meeting at the Air Reserve Personnel Center in Denver was to do an in-depth review of officers' records and provide individual recommendations that ultimately will directly impact career goals and objectives for individual Reservists.

Approximately two to three months before the DT met, eligible CE officers were asked to update their personnel records and complete or update their Reserve Officer Development Plan, indicating their current desires for assignment, command opportunities and developmental education opportunities as well as their overall career goals. These desires were then reviewed by their supervisors, senior raters and commanders. The DT convened and panel members reviewed each member's record, looking at assignment and deployment histories, Officer Performance Reports, education histories (civilian and

military), awards and decorations, participation data, and R-ODP.

"The R-ODP is a major component of the DT process as it provides the officer the unique opportunity to personally express career goals (immediate and long term) when being considered for assignments, command positions and schooling," said Maj. Lance Turner, chief of operations and planning, Expeditionary Combat Support, Headquarters AFRC at Robins Air Force Base, Ga. Major Turner served as an action officer for the DT.

Major Turner said completing an R-ODP in an honest and open way provides Reservists (not only in CE but any career field conducting a DT meeting) with a valuable opportunity to communicate their desires and life situations that may influence which positions and geographic locations are the best fit for their development.

"For example," he said, "as the panel members begin the task of making career recommendations, they should have all the pertinent information before them in order to make the best recommendations through the vectoring process. If there is a personal need to be deferred from a particular assignment or special school, the officer can communicate that desire in the R-ODP."

Maj. Craig Thomas, Fourth Air Force civil engineer at March Air Reserve Base, Calif., served as a board action officer. He reiterated the importance of submitting an honest and fully completed R-ODP, stating the DT process is much more than what some may describe as just "eyewash."

"If career goals aren't stated in black-and-white terms on the R-ODP, senior leaders on the board do not have all the information they need to make sound recommendations," Major Thomas said. "I heard senior officers say more than once when reviewing officer records that they wanted to rate and make tailored recommendations, but sometimes the R-ODP just didn't tell enough about future goals and plans. ... from either the individual or the endorser's perspective."

Critical to the R-ODP process is a member's supervisor, mentor and/or commander's endorsement on the form. This is especially true when an officer is seeking a command position or to attend a school.

"When it comes to a command billet, your immediate supervisor and commander have direct insight on your demonstrated ability to lead and manage," Major Thomas said.

He said officers' conversations with their supervisors and commanders should not be limited to just the R-ODP process, but rather it should be an ongoing process throughout the year. It is very valuable for officers to ask for some mentoring from those with more experience and a sound concept of career development and growth. These ongoing discussions, Major Thomas said, can help Airmen assess what career avenues they wish to achieve.

"Let's face it, not every officer wants to occupy a command position nor fill a national capital region assignment and join a headquarters staff," he said. "The DT panel members need to know this information, coming straight from the member and the member's commander, before they vector officers."

"We have many, many talented CE officers in the Air Force Reserve," said Col. Nicholas L. Desport, Headquarters AFRC



**An Air Force Reserve Command development team reviews Reserve Officer Development Plans at the Air Reserve Personnel Center in Denver. The R-ODP is a critical part of the development team process because it gives officers the opportunity to express their immediate and long-term career goals.**

civil engineer and DT panel chairperson.

For those officers seeking higher positions of authority and command, Colonel Desport advises them not to spend too much time at a single installation or position. He said deployments are critical to helping people better understand the needs and capabilities required to sustain operations during wartime and to experiencing first-hand the stresses and challenges presented to Airmen and their families.

For an officer to compete effectively for higher leadership positions, professional military education, timely performance reports, satisfactory physical training scores and advanced degrees at certain career gates are imperative, Colonel Desport said. He said all Airmen should take ownership of their military records by reviewing them approximately every six months to ensure their personnel source documents are current and in their officer selection records and the military personnel data system.

The DT process is a winning platform for officers as they acknowledge their career expectations while receiving pertinent feedback regarding their present course of action from senior leaders experienced in successfully reaching those objectives.

"2011 is moving fast as we have already accomplished 10 DTs and one school board, and we are moving forward with more on our schedule, including hosting the AFRC enlisted E-8 (senior master sergeant) and E-9 (chief master sergeant) boards in the near future," said Maj. Susan Wheatley, chief of force development operations at ARPC. "Development teams are structured platforms for the continuance of effective mentoring and leadership role expansion, ensuring the next generation of Air Force Reserve leaders is on target and well prepared for increased challenges and responsibilities." ★

*(A regular contributor to Citizen Airman magazine, Mr. Vandevanter is assigned to the Expeditionary Combat Support Division of the Installation and Mission Support Directorate at HQ AFRC.)*

# The Best Care Anywhere

## Whenever the need arises, Reserve nurses are there to answer the call

It's no secret that today's Air Force Reservists are stepping up in ways the Air Force has never witnessed before. Reservists are on the front lines in a host of career fields — deploying, serving and leading along with their regular Air Force counterparts.

Take the nursing force, for example, where Reserve professionals are bringing years of experience gained on active duty and in the civilian world to Air Force nursing jobs around the globe.

Three individual mobilization augmentees — Lt. Col. Alicia Rossiter, Lt. Col. Wesley Hamm and Maj. Susan Garbutt — exemplify how Reserve nurses are volunteering whenever a need arises. They recently stepped up to serve as instructors during Operation Bushmaster, an annual Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences field training exercise that focuses on critical battlefield Air Force specialty codes.

"Our roles included facilitating clinical simulation experiences in the field training environment and serving as faculty evaluators for the clinical nurse specialist and family nurse practitioner graduate nursing student exercise participants," Major Garbutt said. "We served side by side with our active-duty nurse faculty colleagues assigned to the Graduate School of Nursing at USUHS, providing operational support for this annual field training exercise."

All three IMAs serve as adjunct faculty members at the USUHS Graduate School of Nursing where their duties include education and training, clinical simulation, operational readiness exercises, curriculum development, and special projects.

"As experienced nurses, we have provided clinical guidance and oversight in the areas of disease management and clinical practice to graduate nursing students," Major Garbutt said.

She and her colleagues have also taken the lead in volunteering for military medical humanitarian assistance missions around the world. Last year, Major Garbutt and Maj. Marissa Marquez, from the 752nd Medical Squadron at March Air Reserve Base, Calif., deployed as infection control subject matter experts to the Philippines for Pacific Angel, a humanitarian and civic assistance mission.

"We focused on infection prevention education and provided numerous opportunities to share up-to-date infection prevention and control information with local nurses, health-care workers, nursing students, school children, teachers and the public in general," Major Garbutt said.

When they weren't fulfilling their primary mission responsibilities, they helped see patients. In a seven-day period, more than 13,000 local citizens received medical, optometry or dental care.

In addition to his work as part of Operation Bushmaster, Colonel Hamm last year volunteered for Operation Arctic Care in rural Alaska. One of the largest recurring joint military readiness and logistics training exercises in the world, Arctic Care tests the abilities of Air Force, Army and Navy units to deploy and operate as a team in difficult terrain under harsh weather conditions. More than 250 medical, dental, nursing, optometry and veterinary medicine professionals served in 11 Alaska towns and villages. In all, more than \$2 million worth of health-care services were delivered at no cost to the native population.

In addition to providing medical care, military members visited local schools to discuss and encourage healthy living choices and made home medical visits to those unable to travel to a clinic.

"As a member of the team that deployed to Ambler, I was proud of the difference we were able to make in the lives of the people there and the relationships we were able to form," Colonel Hamm said.

Not only are Reserve nurses answering the call during medical exercises around the world, they are also filling a critical role as mentors to young health-care professionals.

"As Reservists in the nurse corps, we have mentored and provided career progression guidance for junior nurse corps officers," Major Garbutt said. "In addition, enlisted troops often seek us out to mentor and advise them when deciding to pursue a career as a registered nurse."

"The internet and e-mail allow us to mentor and exchange nursing strategies, nursing research and evidence-based practices with our military nurse colleagues around the world. I am maintaining an ongoing nursing dialog via e-mail with nurse colleagues here in the continental United States, Hawaii, Japan, Thailand and the Philippines," she said. ★ (From staff reports)

Whether it's a training exercise, humanitarian assistance mission or mentoring, Reserve nurses stand ready to answer the call for help anywhere around the globe.



# AERIAL SPRAY



A C-130 Hercules tactical cargo transport aircraft assigned to the Air Force Reserve's 910th Airlift Wing, Youngstown Air Reserve Station, Ohio, applies a herbicide mixture to control halogeton, an evasive weed that can hamper bombing test evaluations and unexploded ordnance recovery, at the Utah Test and Training Range. The C-130 is equipped with a modular aerial spray system, and the aircraft's crew is extensively trained to conduct this mission while flying at approximately 100 feet above the surface at a ground speed of more than 337 feet per second. (Inset) Lt. Col. Mark Breidenbaugh, a research entomologist, pours a product called Hi-Light into a mixing tank. The bright blue liquid is designed to help crews easily identify areas on the ground that have been treated with the herbicide. The 910th is home to the Department of Defense's only large-area fixed wing aerial spray unit. (Master Sgt. Bob Barko Jr.)

