

PATRIOT

439TH TACTICAL AIRLIFT WING (AIR FORCE RESERVE)

WESTOVER AIR FORCE BASE, MASS.

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Management Effectiveness Inspection

Wing is Rated "Satisfactory"

The 439 TAW was given a satisfactory rating by AFRES Inspector General, Col. Caleb Pendley, and his team of 45 inspectors during a debriefing on Aug. 10. Base personnel streamed into the theatre on that day to hear the inspector's report.

"Strong command support was evident throughout the wing," began Colonel Pendley. "Dress and personal appearance in many units was outstanding. . . The appearance of outside areas reflect the professionalism of assigned personnel . . . Disaster Preparedness

and MWR are deserving of the highest praise. . ."

As he spoke, slides were projected that showed each unit's functions and the evaluations they were given. Many units were rated excellent. Nearly all were satisfactory.

"A satisfactory rating is our standard," said Brig. Gen. Donald E. Haugen, wing commander. "I'm pleased at the overall rating and wish to congratulate everyone on their participation and performance. What we have to do now is to improve upon what is al-

ready a very good organization at a tremendous base," he said.

"The purpose of the MEI was to measure unit and functional area performance against resources allocated and to highlight unit needs," explained Colonel Pendley. "The AFRES MEI provides our commander and staff agencies with an objective appraisal of the status of our units, functions and programs and a valid information base which is not available through other means.



Lending America's helping hand a helping hand are 50 townspeople of Tolatecha, Honduras who tried to push a Westover C-123 out of the mud. See story on page 4. (photo by Marcial Sevilla, USICA Honduras)

Westover clears the trail to better fitness

by SrA Sandra M. Michon

Fitness enthusiasts now can follow the path to better physical conditioning as a new "Fit-trail" has been installed at Westover.

The fitness trail is an innovative combination of running and exercise stations, strategically placed along a

6500-foot long course. The 21 stops include warm-up, work-out and cool-down stations to facilitate safe and thorough conditioning. The course is located across the street from the base swimming pool and tennis courts.

According to Ron Turmelle, assistant director of recreation services, "The

course is designed to allow you to work at your own pace so it is adaptable to all limits of conditioning from the beginner to the advanced.

"It takes the boredom out of jogging, and because of the warming up and cooling down periods, there is less chance of muscle injury."

The fitness trail is a type of par fitness course originally developed by the Norwegians to promote overall good health. Westover's course, one of the first in the area, was installed in July by Civil Engineering and MWR personnel, according to Turmelle.

TSgt. Daniel Carr, 901st aircraft mechanic, runs the course an average of three times weekly. "I think it's excellent," he said. "My first time through really tired me out. Anyone that does the course three times a week will get in pretty good shape. It's a great alternative to running."

"There has been a positive response from our jogging population, and even non-joggers are giving the course a try," said Turmelle. He added that within the next month, all stations will be checked and adjusted when necessary.

The MWR staff recommends that personnel walk the course prior to the first run to familiarize themselves with the order of the stations and the exercises required. The recreation staff offers further information about the course and requests that any damages be reported to the gym immediately.



SSgt. Dannie Webster (right), a 905th CES firefighter, observes his brother Gary Webster doing his pushups as the pair go through the stations on the new "fit trail" (USAF photo by Sgt. Deborah Elliot)

MWR cops top honors

by SrA. Sandra M. Michon

"MWR" could represent "most winning Reserve" as Westover's Morale, Welfare and Recreation division continues to cop top honors.

Westover's MWR, recently received three certificates of excellence from HQ/AFMPC, and have now been named best MWR throughout AFRES. Westover was named "AFRES-best" in June and now qualifies for the Gen. Curtis E. LeMay award.

By qualifying for the LeMay award nomination, Westover steps out into active duty competition as they compete against eight other major commands. The LeMay award recognizes the base with the best overall MWR program in

the Air Force.

During the August UTA, award evaluators inspected Westover's facilities for criteria such as patron satisfaction, participation rates, facility improvements, program initiatives and employee training programs.

Westover is the fifth stop for the award evaluators, and while inspectors would not release specific comments, one evaluator, Sherman Black, stated, "It's going to be a tough decision. There are some super things going on at Westover."

The LeMay award will be presented at the National Parks and Recreation Association's annual conference to be held in Louisville, Ky. this October.

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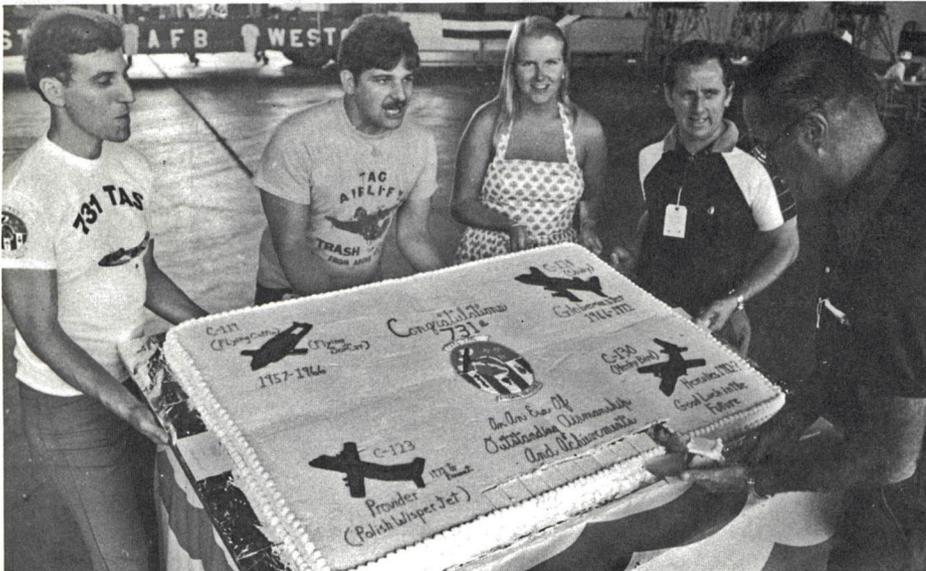
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"Classy Ending"

731st TAS goes out in style



From left, Capt. Wayne Pettito, 731st TAS, SSgt. Gary Vickers, 901st MAPF, and two guests hold the party's cake while retired Lt. Col. George Merrill does the cutting. (USAF photo by MSgt. Marshall Hathaway)

by Capt. Rick Dyer

With a mixture of pomp, pageantry and party, the 731st Tactical Airlift Squadron said goodbye to Westover during the August UTA.

The unit, which will be deactivated Sept. 30, held a formal military ceremony and reunion at the Base Hangar on Aug. 7. It was an afternoon full of nostalgia for the 731st members, many of whom will soon be consolidated into the 337th TAS.

Brig. Gen. Charles Parrott, a former commander of the 731st and now vice commander of 14th Air Force, presented the squadron with its second Air Force Outstanding Unit Award.

In addition to General Parrott, three other generals who previously led the unit participated in the festivities. They were Maj. Gen. Stephen Keefe, Maj. Gen. Thomas Diab, and Brig. Gen. Donald Balch.

General Keefe and CMSgt. Peter J. Fontana received retirement awards at the ceremony. Both recently left the Air Force Reserve after serving 40 and 31 years respectively.

"Some of the happiest days of my life were spent in the 731st," General Keefe said in accepting his award.

Brig. Gen. Donald E. Haugen, commander of the 439th TAW, was presented with a plaque commemorating

the squadron's association with Westover. "I'm very proud of the 731st and its many outstanding accomplishments," he said. "You truly deserve all of the accolades which you are receiving here today."

As the ceremonies opened, three C-123s returning from a tactical training mission flew past the hangar, to the delight of the nearly 400 past and present

731st members and their guests. The planes, which have been flown by the squadron for the past 10 years, are being retired as the 439th converts to an all C-130 inventory.

Following an invocation by Chaplain (Capt.) Frances Passamonte, a lone bugler filled the cavernous hangar with the strains of "Taps" as the names of deceased squadron members were read.

Lt. Col. Edward Lincoln, who has twice served as commander of the 731st, read the orders deactivating the unit.

He also presented a Meritorious Service Medal to Lt. Col. Louis Siroy and Air Force Commendation Medals to Maj. Fred Fowler, MSgt. Frank Spirito and MSgt. Arthur Geddes. All are veteran members of the 731st.

Some of the 731st "alumni" who attended had served with the outfit two and three decades earlier.

A "surf and turf" cookout and music by a country and western band capped the festivities.

The get-together was organized by CMSgt. Charles Fusco, MSgt. James Maynard, TSgt. Jerry Peters and Capt. Bob Martens.

"Everyone had a good time, and it was wonderful to see so many old friends," Sergeant Maynard said. "It was a classy ending for a classy outfit."



Lt. Col. Edward Lincoln, 731st TAS commander, presents Lt. Col. Jerry Bryant, 337th TAS commander, with a plaque signifying the merging of the two units. (USAF photo by MSgt. Marshall Hathaway)



TSgt. Ronald Ploof, 901st MAPS, and Capt. John Walsh, the co-pilot on the mission, watch as a Honduran man exits from the aircraft.

Stuck in the Mud.

Written by Capt. Philip Weber

Photos by Marcial Sevilla, USICA Honduras



Two of the "locals" allow their donkeys to graze near the "big attraction".



Lt. Col. Mike Robbins, a military attache to Honduras who served as an interpreter among other things, keeps his eyes on the aircraft while a steady stream of children tour it.

There I was stuck in the mud for two days in Tolatecha, Honduras," recalled Lt. Col. Edward F. Lincoln of the 731st Tactical Airlift Squadron.

On a demonstration mission to Honduras arranged by the State Department to showcase the capabilities of the C-123 for the Honduran Air Force, the six days into the Central American nation proved "most memorable".

Directed to fly the C-123 on any mission assigned by the embassy, aside from airlift missions with members of the Honduran Air Force, the Westover aircrew became involved in flying an airlift support mission into an area of Honduras that had been ravaged by Hurricane Aleta.

They flew fuel into Tolatecha for helicopters flying relief missions into isolated areas where roads had been washed completely away by the heavy rains accompanying the hurricane.

"We landed at the remote airfield heavily loaded with 6500 pounds of jet

"A" fuel," Lincoln said. "Unfortunately, the airfield manager directed us to an area that was still rainsoaked. There we quickly sank into the mud."

Being the largest airplane ever to land at the small airfield, the C-123 quickly became a curiosity piece. Lt. Col. Mike Robbins of the U.S. Military Group in Honduras gave the aircrew permission to display the aircraft. It was estimated that more than 2,000 people trekked through the airlift aircraft while it was stuck in the mud.

After trying for a day to get the C-123 out of the mud, a four man aircraft recovery team from Howard AFB, Panama was flown in with cables, jacks, shoring material and recovery airbags.

"The airbags did the trick," Lincoln pointed out, "they lifted the aircraft up so that shoring material could be placed under the wheels. Then we were able to roll it back onto the runway and quickly determine that the aircraft was all right."

"Even taking off from Tolatecha

proved to be a memorable experience," Lt. Col. Lincoln recalled. "We had to wait for a 500 pound pig on the runway to finish its dinner before we were able to take off."

"The local people were great," said Lincoln, "They volunteered what equipment they had to get us out of our predicament and even came up with a road grader which proved useless. We even had about 50 people try in vain to physically push the aircraft onto solid ground."

Aside from Col. Lincoln, the 731st TAS aircrew consisted of: Capt. John Walsh, co-pilot; Capt. William Mikolasky, navigator; SMSgt. Peter Fontana, flight mechanic; TSgt. Ronald Ploof, loadmaster; TSgt. Edwin Villaral, loadmaster and MSgt. Paul Norian, crew chief. As Col. Lincoln concluded, it was one of those aircrew stories that will be embellished upon in future years and long remembered by those who participated in the flight.

Patriot Profile

Father's influence leads to flying career



Capt. Bob Martens of the 731st TAS, who inherited his love of flying from his father, stands near the C-123 he flew at Westover. (USAF photo by Capt. Philip Weber)

by Capt. Rick Dyer

When Bob Martens' high school classmates voted him "most likely to succeed," they predicted that he'd achieve great heights.

That was in 1966, and the past 16 years have proven just how right they were.

Since 1971, the 33-year old Manchester, Conn. native has been flying C-130s and C-123s for the Air Force and Air Force Reserve.

He is currently a captain with the 731st TAS and a full-time civilian employee at Westover as an Air Reserve Technician. Those jobs keep him right where he wants to be—in the cockpit of Air Force cargo aircraft.

Captain Martens inherited his love of flying machines from his father, William. The elder Martens has been an aviation enthusiast since his childhood, and holds a pilot's license. He worked for a number of years as an engineer at Pratt & Whitney Aircraft in East Hartford, where the C-123 engine was manufactured.

"My Dad is the kind of airplane buff who still runs outside to look every time he hears a plane flying overhead," Captain Martens said. "He had a definite impact on my decision to become an Air Force pilot."

Following his graduation from high school, the captain attended college at Catholic University in Washington, D.C. where he enrolled in the Air Force ROTC program. He was commissioned a second lieutenant upon graduation in 1970, and he's been in the cockpit ever since.

After he graduated from pilot training in 1971, Captain Martens flew air rescue missions for the Air Force in huge, HC-130 aircraft. He spent seven years on active duty, flying missions out of Eglin AFB in Florida and Kadena AB in Okinawa, Japan. His duties included providing air rescue coverage for NASA space flights, Presidential flights, and the Vietnam refugee airlift.

Captain Martens is personally credited with saving seven lives on various rescue missions. For his efforts, he has been awarded the Air Force Commendation Medal and the Air Force Humanitarian Service Medal.

"I love to fly," the veteran pilot said. "It is a constant challenge, and I learn something new everytime I pilot a plane."

The captain's military duties have taken him throughout Europe and the Orient, and he says one of his biggest thrills came when his unit recently won the General Claire Chennault Award. The award, named after the fabled

World War II Flying Tiger ace, is presented annually to the outstanding flying squadron in 14th Air Force.

But not all of Captain Martens' hours in the cockpit have been pleasant ones. In 1977, while flying a mission off the coast of Japan, his C-130 developed an oil leak and caught fire.

"The engine was on fire, and we tried to blow it out by going into a dive," he related. "The flames would subside when we dove, but they erupted again each time we leveled off."

Captain Martens succeeded in extinguishing the flames after a harrowing ten minutes, and the plane landed safely. "I have never seen so many rescue vehicles in my life as there were when we finally touched down," he said.

He has flown 1,600 hours in the C-130 and more than 2,000 hours in the C-123. He will be reunited with the C-130 model next fall when the 439th retires its two-engine "Providers" in favor of an all C-130 E inventory.

The conversion will mean that Martens, along with most of the other 731st pilots, will attend C-130 training program at Little Rock AFB, Arkansas.

"I'll have to go back to school for several months to relearn the different systems, but it will be worth it," the captain said. "I'd rather fly than do anything else I can think of."

901st puts some English on their tour

by TSgt. Claire Gaudreau,
901st MOBSFLT

Oh, to be in England in the Summer — especially this Summer with the royal birth and Wimbledon occupying the world's attention. That's where 27 members of the 901st Mobility Squadron flight spent their two week annual tour, June 26 to July 9.

The unit was assigned to the 48th Tactical Fighter Wing with its F-111f jets at RAF Lakenheath and worked with the active duty personnel in a variety of areas.

numerous duty area

"Most were assigned to Base Supply and worked in the areas of Demand Processing, Training, Repair Cycle, Stock Control, Bench Stock, Storage and Issue and MICAP. The latter is the surge area where aircraft parts, not readily available through normal channels are requisitioned," explained Capt. Robert Dutton, 901st commander. "We also augmented our active duty counterparts in the disaster preparedness, fuels, vehicle maintenance, and accounting and finance sections.

"This first hand involvement with the regulars not only allows us to put our own skills to worthwhile use, but we can

compare their operations methods with ours and learn in the process," he concluded.

historical overview

But all was not work.

On an introductory tour, we learned that the 48th TFW, originally a World War II fighter group, had been reactivated and sent to France in the 1950s. There the locals gave the wing the original production model of the Statue of Liberty. Its adopted name, "Statue of Liberty Wing", is the only official name designated in the Air Force. The 48th moved to England in the mid 1960s.

We were also briefed about RAF Lakenheath which was built in 1942 as a decoy base with balsa and canvas dummy planes. The British occupied it until the 1950s. Then, it became the largest American Air Force installation in Europe with more than 5,000 airmen. It is the second largest and busiest supply

complex in Europe.

The unit also joined in the base's July 4th celebration. There was a three day festival of food and games, rides and fireworks. TSgt. Tom Valley, SSgt. Gerry Barron and A1C Lowell Manning helped at the base supply's dunking booth.

Meanwhile, Captain Dutton, A1C Ken Miller and Amn. Owen Noel either called or visited with family members in England. SSgt. Al Chenaille probably had the greatest thrill of all. He watched the Wimbledon tennis match between John McEnroe and Springfield's Tim Mayotte.

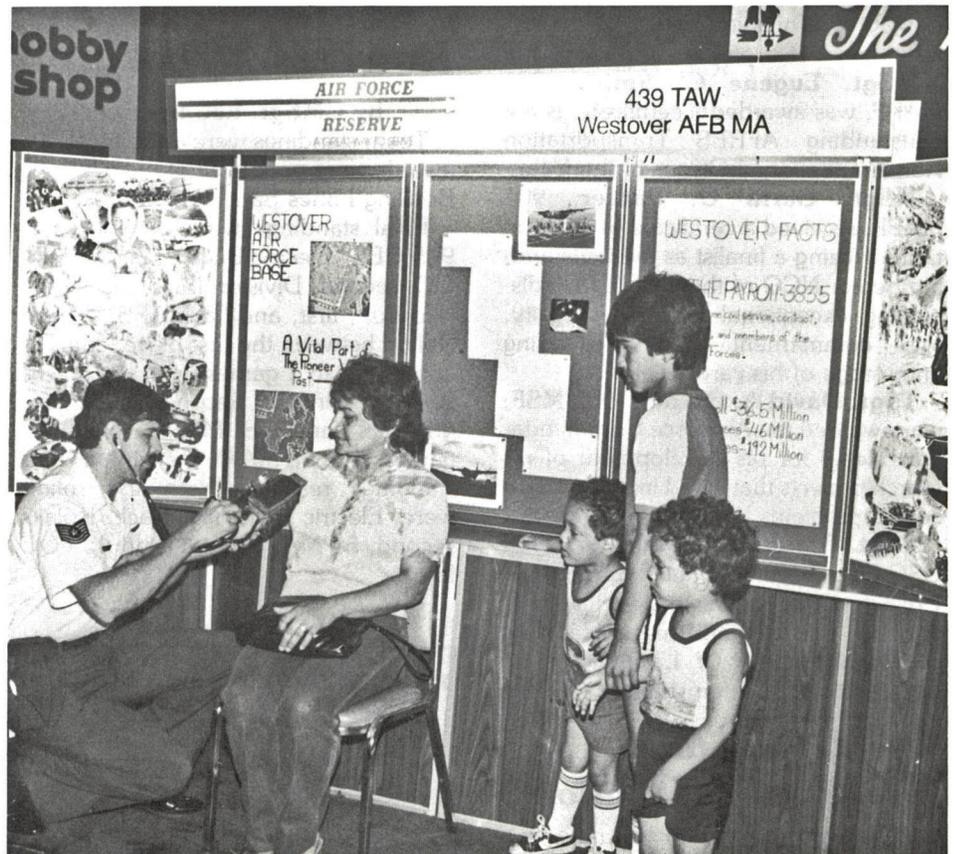
We returned to Westover realizing that the trip was our "last hurrah". With the departure of the C-123s from Westover, our unit would be merged with the 905th in October. I think we all agreed that we made it exactly that — our last, and by far our best tour together."

NCO Dining Out Speaker Announced

Col. George E. "Bud" Day, the nation's most highly decorated officer since Gen. Douglas MacArthur, will be the speaker for this year's NCO dining out, November 6th. He holds nearly seventy military decorations and awards of which more than fifty are for combat.

In 1976, while commanding the "MISTY SUPER FAC" F-100 squadron, Colonel Day was shot down over North Vietnam and spent 67 months as a Prisoner of War. He escaped from prison there only to be recaptured by the Viet Cong in the South.

In addition to his military accomplishments, Day is also a university instructor, published author, and a member of various prestigious organizations including the American Bar Association.



TSgt. Donald Cherry and 11 other members of the 74th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron took blood pressure checks on 1,850 shoppers at the 439th TAW-sponsored exhibit at the Fairfield Mall's (Chicopee) 'block party' on Sat. Aug. 7. The unit's nurses and technicians found 350 with elevated pressure and recommended that the shoppers seek medical help. (Air Force Photo by MSgt. Larry Lentz)



William Payne smiles after receiving medals from Brig. Gen. Donald Haugen, 439th TAW commander, during ceremonies at Westover.

CC Awards

A variety of medals were awarded by Brig. Gen. Donald E. Haugen, wing commander, during the August UTA.

MSgt. Leroy Johnson on behalf of the 439th Transportation Section, accepted nomination for the Best Air Force Motor Vehicle Operations Unit of the Year, due to the units outstanding display of professionalism and dedication.

MSgt. Eugene C. Smith, 901 MAPF, was awarded a certificate as the Outstanding AFRES Transportation Noncommissioned Officer of the Year.

MSgt. Garth O. Parker, 901 MAPF, received a certificate of recognition for being a finalist as the Outstanding Senior NCO of the Year 1981, displaying exceptional leadership ability, total commitment, and outstanding knowledge of his career field.

TSgt. David A. Burden, 905 MSF, was awarded the Air Force Commendation Medal for his development of research projects that aided in solving procedural problems in the Fuels Section.

TSgt. Robert G. Shedd, Jr., 439 CSG/SP, received the Community College of the Air Force associate's degree in Criminal Justice, successfully completing school at Lackland AFB, Texas, and OJT internships.

New Hours for Westover Gas Station

The base gas station will now be open on both Saturday and Sunday on UTA weekends. Saturday hours are 1000-1700. Sunday hours are 1100-1730. Also, the revised Tuesday through Friday hours are 1000-1700.

WWII veteran gets Medals

by Capt. Rick Dyer

Former TSgt. William C. Payne is living proof that all things come to those who wait.

The 73-year-old World War II B-17 gunner received eight medals on Aug. 7 during ceremonies at Westover. He had earned the honors 40 years earlier.

Payne flew on 15 combat missions and personally shot down one enemy plane before his aircraft was destroyed over Germany. Wounded, he was taken captive by the Germans and spent the next 14 months in Nazi prisoner of war camps.

Near the end of World War II, Payne was one of 10,000 Allied POWs whom the Nazis led on a forced march. The ordeal, which became known as the "Black March", lasted 86 days.

"We marched about 25 miles a day and sometimes all we got was one potato," he said.

The Army Air Corps veteran received wounds in his right side and leg which ultimately led to a disability discharge

from the service in 1945.

At the time, he believed he was entitled to some medals for his war-time service and was waiting to receive them.

Payne's waiting came to an end in August when Brig. Gen. Donald E. Haugen, commander of the 439th TAW, pinned a fist full of medals on him. The awards and decorations included the Purple Heart, the Air Medal with two Oak Leaf Clusters, the European Theater of Operations Medal with two bronze service stars and the Army Good Conduct Medal.

"I guess somehow I was just overlooked after the War," Payne said after the ceremony. "But better late than never," he added.

The former POW said that he decided to request the decorations earlier this year as souvenirs for his family. He is a member of the Disabled American Veterans chapter in Springfield and the DAV was instrumental in seeing to it that Payne received the recognition he had earned four decades earlier.

Bowlers strike up tournament awards

by CMSgt. Lee Spencer

Team standings were announced and awards were presented at the Westover Bowling Lanes Sat., June 12.

Final standings were: Division I — 905 CES "Electric Bulls", first, and 439 QC, second; Division II — OJ5 Comm "Kojaks", first, and 58 MAPS, second. Rolloff between the first place teams resulted in 3 to 1 games, with the Electric Bulls the winners. Second place teams, 439 QC and 58 MAPS rolled 4-0 games, with 58 MAPS the winner. Final standings resulting from the rollofts were: Electric Bulls, first place; Kojaks, second; 58 MAPS, third, and 439 QC, fourth.

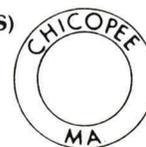
The following individual awards were presented: Men's high single, John Speidel, 220; men's high series, Robert Lester, 580, and men's high average, John Madden, 166. Among the women, Fran Breedlove had the high game, 202, high series, 562 and high average, 161.

Team awards were given for team high series, 59 MAPS, 3087, and team high game, DA Bombers, 1083.

The following officers were elected for the 1982/83 UTA Fall/Winter Bowling season: president, Fran Breedlove, vice-president, John Speidel, and secretary-treasurer, Lee Spencer.

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