

PATRIOT

439th Airlift Wing - Westover Air Reserve Base
October 2005 - Vol. 32, No. 10

HISTORIC MISSION – Two hundred evacuees prepare to take off while strapped down in the cargo deck of a Patriot Wing C-5 Sept. 3 at Louis B. Armstrong Airport in New Orleans, following the devastation of Hurricane Katrina. For more on this mission, turn to Page 3.

(photo by Staff Sgt. Tom Ouellette)

439th AW MISSION: Actively support national objectives on a global scale with ready, mobility forces

439th pulls off Family Day in style

As we all know, every UTA at Westover is packed with a busy regimen of training, meetings, inspections, and much more. The September A UTA was no exception. We pulled this one off with typical Patriot Wing style! We held our annual Family Day, where hundreds of family members converge on the base to celebrate a well-deserved break with their loved ones.

The Galaxy Adventure, however, was the first of its kind, and because of the efforts of so many folks, it was an absolute success. Cheryl Kirkwood, the family support center director, led her staff in a huge undertaking. The volunteers with the Key Family Member Program also stepped up to this effort, making sure that 222 children were safely transported around the base to visit such areas as a C-5 static display, the fire department, and many others. Scores of volunteers joined forces with the KFMP folks to handle this massive operation with a lot of "behind the scenes" efforts.

Dedication is what this wing is all about. Once again we put airplanes in the air – five missions went out on the long Labor Day weekend alone – to support the huge relief effort for the devastated areas of Louisiana and Mississippi. Our aircrews airlifted search and rescue teams, a tent city, and a most unusual payload for the C-5. On Sept. 3, we took 200 evacuees from Louis B. Armstrong Airport to Fort Smith, Ark. This was a first for many of the aircrew members on the flight! Please turn to Page 3 to read more about this historic mission.

We as a wing now direct our focus on the next major operation for the 439th: the August 2006 Operational Readiness Inspection. This is where we will once again show the inspectors and the Air Force our unparalleled level of readiness and professionalism. Whether or not you are one of the folks tasked to "spin up" for the ORI, now is the time to start working together and focusing on the task at hand – getting ready to deploy and earning an outstanding rating! I know that the combined talents and hard work of the members of this wing are a formidable capability – let's press on and show it!



Col. Wade Farris

439th Airlift Wing commander

Briefs

'Galaxy Gabbers' meet bi-monthly at club

Reservists and civilian employees at Westover are invited to join the new Toastmasters club which meets bi-monthly in the Westover Club.

The "Galaxy Gabbers" meet at 11:30 a.m. each first and third Wednesday. Membership is open to reservists and civilian employees at Westover.

Toastmasters is a worldwide organization devoted to helping people improve their speaking and listening skills.

For more information, e-mail Rebecca Cross, the club's vice president for public relations, at rebecca.cross@westover.af.mil

Fall bowling league taking sign-ups on base

Sign-ups are being taken for the base fall bowling league. Participants may choose among the following leagues: Monday Night Mixed, Tuesday Night Ladies', Wednesday Night Men's, and the Thursday Night Mixed.

The bowling center staff offers birthday bowling party specials for all ages. The specials include two hours of bowling, shoes, and choice of meal, party plates, and other condiments, starting at \$8.50 per person.

Daily lunch specials are offered every day at the snack bar from 1-2 p.m.

For additional information, call the bowling center at Ext. 3990. The center is on Hercules Road across from the base exchange.

Wing IG reminds members of their rights

Air Force members have the right to:

- File a complaint at any level without going through their supervisory channel.
- File a complaint with an Inspector General (IG) without fear of reprisal.
- Submit complaints anonymously.
- Submit a complaint even if the member is not the wronged party or was not affected by the alleged violation.

For more information, call the 439th AW/IG, Lt. Col. Patricia Evans, at Ext. 3137.

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"The content is edited, prepared and provided by the 439th Airlift Wing Public Affairs Office, Westover Air Reserve Base. All photographs are Air Force photographs unless otherwise indicated."

439th Airlift Wing commander

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C-5 aircrew evacuates hurricane victims

Article and photo

by Staff Sgt. Tom Ouellette

EDITOR'S NOTE: Sergeant Ouellette, a 439th Airlift Wing public affairs specialist, flew with the aircrew of the second Hurricane Katrina relief mission that left Westover Sept. 2.

Even the most hardened aircrew couldn't believe what they saw.

A line of exhausted and starving Hurricane Katrina victims, extending several miles, awaited entry into New Orleans' Louis B. Armstrong International Airport Sept. 3. Thousands more packed the airport's halls. A makeshift hospital, positioned in the rear of the airport, tended to hundreds of sick.

A massive number of aircraft, from cargo planes to helicopters, both military and civilian, dominated the airport. It was virtually impossible to glance upward without seeing scores of aircraft swarming overhead. Helicopters swooped in and out every 10 seconds.

Katrina wreaked havoc on New Orleans. The city's unforgiving levees breached and flooded 80 percent of New Orleans, leaving survivors with few choices for refuge. Streams of victims flocked to the airport, more than 1000 per hour, desperate to escape.

And a Patriot Wing C-5 crew was in the middle of it all.

"I've done relief missions before, but I've never seen devastation like this. These people had nothing. Absolutely nothing," said Maj. Gary W. Cooke, aircraft commander.

Sheer numbers of evacuees at the airport, estimated at 20,000 when the crew arrived, forced an immediate change in the crew's plans. Originally there only to drop off relief supplies, fresh orders instructed the crew to evacuate victims ASAP.

The change required them to think fast. Although they had three skilled loadmasters with more than 60 years of combined experience, they never "loaded" people in such a way. Their chief concern was keeping the victims safe, a tremendous task involving limited resources and nothing to reference.

"The last time a C-5 airlifted people in its cargo bay was during the Vietnam War," Major Cooke said.

Difficult decisions had to be made. Many of the victims were elderly or babies. Scores were sick and some were confined to wheelchairs. Climbing a C-5's ladder upstairs into the troop compartment endangered too many of the evacuees' safety. And separating the crew into various sections of the plane was unfeasible. They were simply too small to break up to effectively watch over everyone. For safety reasons, everyone needed to be strapped in the cargo bay.

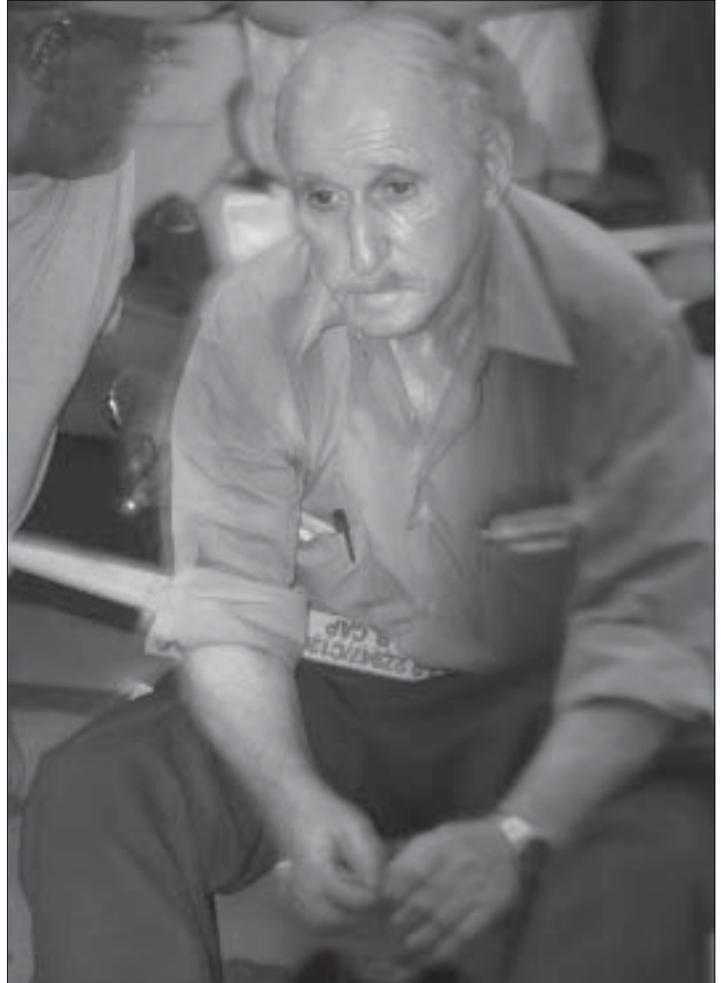
Supplies were limited and the aircrew needed to improvise. Cargo straps were used as "seatbelts," pinning the evacuees to the plane's steel floor. Every available coat, jacket and shirt became pillows and blankets. Balled toilet paper served as earplugs.

The crew flew 200 evacuees to Fort Smith, Ark., where awaiting government officials transported them to old, unoccupied Army barracks in nearby Fort Chafee, Okla. "The lack of straps prevented us from taking more," Major Cooke said.

"None of the evacuees complained. They didn't even know where we were taking them. They were just happy to get out. The flight was actually upbeat," said Master Sgt. Daniel G. Hogan, a 337th Airlift Squadron loadmaster. "We didn't even know where we were going until moments prior to take-off."

Most of the evacuees slept during the one-hour flight. "Many

see EVACUEES continued on Page 12



WAITING AND WONDERING -- The expression on this man, one of 200 evacuees who boarded a Patriot Wing C-5 Sept. 3, represented the plight of the thousands of people whose homes were destroyed by Hurricane Katrina. The C-5 crew flew the evacuees to Fort Smith, Ark. For more photos on the hurricane relief missions, turn to Pages 8 and 9.

Aircrews deliver nearly 1 million pounds of cargo to Louisiana

by Tech. Sgt. Andrew Biscoe

The 439th Airlift Wing supported nine missions for the Hurricane Katrina relief efforts in Louisiana.

Patriot Wing aircrews airlifted nearly 1 million pounds of cargo. Crews began flying missions within 24 hours of the disaster. The first mission took place Aug. 30 and involved two aircraft from the 439th AW. One flew from Westover nonstop to March Air Reserve Base, Calif., while the other was diverted from Norfolk Naval Base, Va. That crew also flew to March.

see MISSIONS continued on Page 12

Chaplain's assistant thwarts attacks to the soul

by Senior Master Sgt Sandi Michon

During his four months in Iraq, Staff Sgt. John Shepard couldn't stop the constant rocket and mortar attacks against Balad AB, but he worked very hard to stop attacks of fear, homesickness, loneliness and discouragement that assaulted hundreds of troops stationed there.

Deployed to one of Iraq's largest air bases, Sergeant Shepard worked 12-16 hour days ministering as chaplain's assistant from April 28 to September 6. During the first week, constant rocket and mortar attacks kept the troops in full battle gear – adding 15-20 degrees to the average 120-degree temperatures. During his first week at Balad, a rocket hit close enough to ricochet rocks off the side of his two-man trailer hooch.

"We hit the floor and waited it out," he said, but added that he felt spiritually and mentally prepared for whatever happened to him.

Sergeant Shepard attributes his "peace under fire" to a firm faith in God. That faith propelled him to sacrifice four months away from his wife and three children to try to make a difference half a world away. As chaplain's assistant, his primary job is to protect the chaplain and also to help with the chaplain's programs.

"We didn't wait for people to come to us," he said. They visited the flight line three days a week, the maintenance units two days, had mid-week service at the hospital, and held services on Sunday. They hosted Bible studies, held daily Mass and participated in the recreational activities.

"We always looked for clues that someone might be in trouble, and tried to connect with them," Sergeant Shepard said. He recalled a man named Scott whose father was hospitalized back home.

"We talked often as he tried to do what he could despite the long distance between Iraq and home," the sergeant recalled. With a blonde crewcut and fit physique, he blends customs and courtesies with compassion. Having served six years with security forces – with deployments to Germany and Saudi Arabia – Shepard is well-acquainted with deployment stress.

"Besides the separation from loved ones and loneliness, a lot of stress comes from dealing with so many unknowns," he said, adding that a hostile environment heightens the need to do each job exactly right. "Errors in a combat situation might cost someone their life," he said.

Sergeant Shepard stared unseeing, at the table, seemingly carried back to Iraq, as he recalled the prayer ceremonies held for the dead soldiers in the C-17 cargo bay before the flight headed state-side. Staring at the caskets, it hit home that he was looking at fellow Americans.

"I'll remember it for the rest of my life," he said.

SLGI increase to \$400,000 began Sept. 1 for military

ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga. - Four hundred thousand dollars of Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance automatically went into effect for everyone in the U.S. military Sept. 1.

If people don't want the maximum

SGLI coverage, they will have to change it in writing, even if they opted for much less or none in the past. The current maximum coverage is \$250,000.

In addition, a new law now requires the services to tell spouses if servicemembers designate a primary beneficiary other than their current lawful spouse, or they turn down SGLI coverage or reduce it after Sept. 1.

To change insurance amounts or who gets it, Airmen need to visit their unit's commander support staff or military personnel flight to fill out a SGLV Form 8286. If de-

ployed, their personnel for contingency operation team can help.

SGLI coverage still runs 6.5 cents per month for \$1,000 of insurance, but the increments of coverage change from \$10,000 to \$50,000. If people take no action, the monthly maximum premium automatically goes from \$16.25 to \$26. Airmen can avoid the increase if they turn in a form before Sept. 30.

This change does not affect coverage of family members under the Family Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance.

SGLI continued on Page 5



Courtesy photo

DEPLOYED DUTY -- Staff Sgt. John Shepard, deployed 439th Airlift Wing chaplain's assistance, talks with children while on a humanitarian mission in Iraq. Sergeant Shepard returned in September from a four-month deployment to Balad Air Base, where he served as a chaplain's assistant with the 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing.

To cope with his own stress, Shepard used what little down time he had to watch Hogan's Heroes and seven seasons of M.A.S.H. on his DVD player.

"The comedy helped out," he said with a wry smile, and he remarked how relevant the TV M.A.S.H. unit was to the huge tent hospital located at Balad.

He got off base only a few times – once to a forward operating base to check on the troops, once for a humanitarian mission giving donation items to local children and one trip to Baghdad located some 50 miles to the south.

Just a few days back from his deployment, Shepard enjoyed Westover's Family Day with his wife, Stacey and their three children. With four years prior service in security forces, Stacey knows the deployment ropes. She says they coped well during his absences but noted that e-mail has made a big difference.

"If I had a question, I would send an e-mail and get a quick response. It helped me solve problems faster," Stacey said. She also praised the Key Member family support program. "This is our third deployment, but this is the first time someone had called me to see how we were doing," she said. "We're just relieved that he's back safely."

New commanders lead aerial port, support squadrons

by Master Sgt. Tom Allocco

The values of integrity and obligations of leadership were invoked when the 58th Aerial Port Squadron and 439th Mission Support Squadron conducted joint change of command ceremonies in the shadow of a C-5A Galaxy during the September AUTA.

Lt. Col. Richard M. Cockley accepted the flag of command of the 58th APS from Lt. Col. Peter A. DeTone. Colonel DeTone was appointed deputy 439th Mission Support Group commander for aerial port operations. Maj. Gregory M. Federico assumed command of the 439th MSS to succeed Colonel Cockley.

Col. Dana S. Marsh, 439th MSG commander, who spoke at the ceremony, reminded the aerial port and mission support formations that "first, last and always is integrity. You commanders would not be standing here today if you didn't have it."

The group commander recalled the recent annual tour of the aerial porters in Germany.

She spoke of a visit to the American cemetery in Luxembourg where Gen. George Patton is buried under a simple cross facing 5,076 other World War II men and women.

"Patton lies there as though he is still in command of those troops....he inspired people to accomplish the seemingly impossible, he mentored through example, he never asked others to do what he wasn't prepared to do himself. In a word he had integrity," she said.

Addressing the two new squadron commanders, she assured them that Airmen will respond to leadership. "Raise the standard even higher...support them, challenge them and you will be amazed at what they can accomplish," she said.

Major Federico was commissioned in 1994 following graduation from Bridgewater State College, Bridgewater, Mass. He joined the Patriot Wing following four years of



photo by Airman 1st Class Timm Huffman

COMMANDERS' CADENCE -- Marching to the joint change of command ceremony held Sept. 11 on the flight line, are from left, Maj. Gregory M. Federico, Lt. Col. Richard M. Cockley and Peter A. DeTone, and Col. Dana S. Marsh. Colonel Cockley took over as commander of the 58th Aerial Port Squadron, and Major Federico succeeded him as 439th Mission Support Squadron commander. Colonel Marsh, 439th Mission Support Group commander, also spoke at the ceremony.

active duty. He most recently served as 439th Security Forces Squadron chief of training and resources.

In accepting command, Major Federico pledged, "I will put my trust in the men and women of the mission support squadron. I ask you to continue your tradition of excellence. I, in return, will work hard to earn your respect," he said.

Colonel Cockley was commissioned in 1985 following graduation from Southern Connecticut State University, New Haven, Conn. He served at Langley Air Force Base, Va., before earning a master's degree from the Air Force Institute of Technology at Wright Patterson AFB, Ohio. Before taking command of the 439th MSS, he served as

439th Airlift Wing plans officer for eight years.

Colonel Cockley welcomed the approaching Operational Readiness Inspection and other challenges. He thanked Colonel DeTone for developing the "exceptional foundation" of the 58th APS. "I look forward to improving on the outstanding tradition of excellence," he told the Green Hats of the 58th. Colonel DeTone's final words as commander of the 58th APS expressed satisfaction that the squadron rose to the challenges of 9/11 and grew stronger. More than 90 members have deployed.

"We've built on the foundation of their enthusiasm and active-duty experience," he said.

SGLI continued from Page 4

Veterans can opt for more coverage under Veteran Group Life Insurance if they are covered by SGLI before separating from the service. The increased SGLI coverage becomes retroactive to Oct. 7, 2001, for survivors of servicemembers who died in a combat zone, combat operations or combat-related situations. If death occurs between Oct. 7, 2001, and Sept. 1, 2005, sur-

vivors receive \$150,000 in transitional insurance, bringing the total maximum coverage to \$400,000.

In addition, the U.S. military's death gratuity benefit increased from \$12,500 to \$100,000 effective May 11. It too is retroactive to Oct. 7, 2001. This means that survivors of servicemembers who died between Oct. 7, 2001, and May 11, 2005, receive the increased benefits, said Col. Virginia

Penrod, director of military compensation.

"There was concern that we weren't recognizing direct sacrifice of life in service to our nation," she said. "That's how the increase was made for those particular situations." Westover reservists with questions about SGLI may call the military personnel flight customer service office at Ext. 3871.

(AFRC News Service from American Forces Press Service)

Patriot Wing families gather for Fa



photo by Master Sgt. W.C. Pope

HEAVE-HO -- Staff Sgt. Susan Bolduc, 337th Airlift Squadron loadmaster, lets children tug on tie-down chains during a tour of the C-5's cargo area.



WHAT'S THE CATCH? -- Children reach for prizes tossed into the air. Twenty-two children attended the events that took place across the

DADDY'S DUDE
-- Deven Thompson, 3, stands by his dad, Lt. Col. Steve Thompson of the 439th OSS during Galaxy Adventure on Sept. 10. They were joined by Deven's mom, Maj. Shiela Thompson of the 439th Airlift Control Flight, and his sister Daniela, age 1.



photo by Senior Master Sgt. Sandi Michon



FIRE DEMO -- A Westover fire truck sprays a blast of water during a demonstration for family members at the first-ever Galaxy Adventure Day Sept. 10. The Westover Family Support Center staff organized and coordinated the Galaxy Adventure with help from the Key Family Member Program volunteers.

- photo by Master Sgt. W.C. Pope

Family Day, first Galaxy Adventure



photo by Senior Master Sgt. Sandi Michon

crowd during Westover's Family Day on Sept. 10. Two hundred base all day.



photo by Senior Airman Michael Lanza

SHAKE, TAKE, SALUTE -- Col. Wade Farris, 439th Airlift Wing commander, returns the salute of one of the children that participated in the Galaxy Adventure and Family Day events. Colonel Farris presented each child a Key Family Member Program coin.



photo by Master Sgt. W.C. Pope

PINT-SIZE PILOT -- Xavier Lopez, 2, plays pilot in a C-5 cockpit as his dad, Staff Sgt. Epifanio Lopez, 58th Aerial Port Squadron, explains one of the gauges. The C-5 static display was among many areas on base for the children to visit during the first Galaxy Adventure Day at the base.



photo by Master Sgt. W.C. Pope

KER-SPLASH! -- Maj. Patrick S. Ryan, 439th Communications Squadron, takes his first dunk of many at the popular dunking booth.

"It was hot; everyone was sweating. I had a bottle of Gatorade in my pocket and I wanted badly to drink it. But I'd be damned if I was going to drink it in front of them! The evacuees had nothing to drink. I just couldn't do it. A 4-year-old

didn't want to get into the plane. He was scared of flying. I didn't know what to do so I promised him I'd sit next to him so he wouldn't be afraid. It worked. He smiled and went in and I kept my promise. During take off, I sat next to him and checked on him throughout the flight. I don't think we could've gotten him in (the C-5) if I hadn't promised to be by his side."



Tech. Sgt. Daniel J. Howard,
439th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron crew chief

"When we landed I remember thinking 'Wow, what is this? Is this a war zone?' I've been on many humanitarian mis-

sions, but never have seen this kind of tempo. Then I realized we were in the middle of it. Usually we are on the outside looking in. It [airlifting evacuees] was so gratifying. When we were putting the evacuees into the C-5 it was 90 degrees outside and 100 degrees inside. They were tired. Some people were praying. But whenever we landed and opened the gate, the people were elated. They were so happy to get to a safe place."



Senior Master Sgt. Robert W. Karrasch,
337th Airlift Squadron loadmaster



photo by Tech. Sgt. Andrew Biscoe

FEMA AIRLIFT -- Senior Airman Jonathan R. Ash, and Tech. Sgt. Ava M. Swedock, 337th Airlift Squadron loadmasters, help FEMA workers drive emergency equipment from the C-5 at Lafayette Regional Airport, La., Aug. 31. This was the first of nine missions flown by the Patriot Wing by mid-September in support of the hurricane relief operations.

"When we landed you would have thought we landed in the Garden of Eden. They cheered. The evacuees were so happy and grateful we got them out of New Orleans. When we were escorting them off the plane, a mother of four approached me. All she had left was a box of diapers. It was her only possession and she needed it; two of her children were babies. She asked me if I could find her a trash bag to save the mangled box of diapers from falling apart. I ran upstairs to find a trash bag but the only one I found had huge holes in it. The bag was horrible, nobody would think of using it, but it was the only one I had. I took it to her and wrapped the box as best I could. You would have thought I gave the woman a million dollars. She was so grateful, she started crying, hugged me and thanked me repeatedly. It's an experience I'll never forget."



Staff Sgt. Thomas R. Ouellette,
439th Airlift Wing public affairs specialist

FERRYING FEMA -- Members of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) discuss their plans shortly after landing at Lafayette Regional Airport, La., Aug. 31 as their equipment is driven off the Patriot Wing C-5. The C-5 carried 75,000 pounds of cargo which included two FEMA search and rescue teams.



photo by Tech. Sgt. Andrew Biscoe



photo by Staff Sgt. Tom Ouellette

MOTHER'S ARMS -- A baby girl clings to her mother's arms as the evacuees wait to take off from New Orleans. The hour-long flight took the evacuees to Fort Smith, Ark.



photo by Staff Sgt. Tom Ouellette

WAITING TO FLY -- Exhausted evacuees from New Orleans, La., wait as the C-5 prepares to take off from Louis B. Armstrong Airport Sept. 3. Westover crew members strapped each of the 200 men, women, and children to the floor of the C-5's cargo deck.



Tech. Sgt. James M. Griffin, 337th AS flight engineer

"Airlifting the hurricane victims was amazing, but sad. It felt great to help these people but after seeing the destruction ... seeing them... it was depressing. Throughout the flight you don't think about it. You just do your job. But when we landed we were emotionally and physically exhausted. It changes you."



photo by Tech. Sgt. Andrew Biscoe

MARSHALING IN -- Tech. Sgt. Adam Burr, 439th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, right, trains an Airman in marshaling in the C-5 that returned to Westover Sept. 4 from the historic evacuation trip out of Louis B. Armstrong Airport in New Orleans.



Maj. Gary W. Cooke, aircraft commander

"I've done relief missions before, but never seen devastation like this before. It was unbelievable. It had more of a sense of urgency. I was just glad to help and I'm lucky to have had the opportunity. It makes me proud to be in the military."

NCO earns Bronze Star for efforts during OIF duty at Baghdad Airport

A master sergeant who deployed for Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003 and earned the Bronze Star was recognized for his effort at the September A UTA Commanders Call. Master Sgt. Thomas M. O'Brien, 439th Airlift Control Flight, deployed to Baghdad International Airport in April 2003. Col. Wade Farris, 439th Airlift Wing commander, pinned the Bronze Star on the sergeant in front of his family and hundreds of wing members watching in the Base Hangar.

Sergeant O'Brien's Bronze Star citation honored his professionalism which included his conducting ground operations on the ramp at Baghdad International Airport in a hostile and austere environment. He and other Westover ALCF members changed the airport from a combat bare base to sustained operations. The airport later became the largest Middle East hub during the war.

The 439th ALCF was the first and only AFRC Tanker Airlift Control Element in Iraq during the war. Sergeant O'Brien was also the Air Force Reserve Command Airlift Control Flight Loadmaster of the Year for 2003.



photo by Senior Airman Brian Boynton, 439th Communications Squadron

BRONZE STAR – Master Sgt. Thomas M. O'Brien, 439th Airlift Control Flight, has a Bronze Star pinned by Col. Wade Farris, 439th AW commander, during Commander's Call Sept. 10 at the Base Hangar. Sergeant O'Brien earned the Bronze Star for his deployment to Baghdad, Iraq with ALCF members in April 2003.

Commander reminds retirees they are always part of wing

by Master Sgt. Tom Allocco

The Patriot Wing welcomed back former members and reminded them that they will always be part of the Westover Family during a Retiree Appreciation/Remembrance Ceremony in the Base Hangar on Saturday of the September UTA.

Col. Wade Farris, 439th Airlift Wing commander, noted that the service of those who retired during the past year totaled about 2,800 years.

"This hangar is considered the heart and soul of Westover. It is appropriate that you be honored here because you are the heart and soul of operations at Westover," he said.

The wing commander was joined by Chicopee Mayor Richard R. Goyette in honoring the retirees with presentation of a 439th AW coin and letter of appreciation.

Colonel Farris said that the years of service came at the price of sacrificed time with families. That sacrifice is part of a tradition that can be traced to farmers who took up arms at Lexington (Mass.), he said.

"You missed birthdays, missed anniversaries....you chose to sacrifice in service of our military. We appreciate that tradition of service to our country dating back 200 years to the citizen-soldiers of Lexington and Concord," he said. Colonel Farris noted that the next day would mark four years since the 9/11 attacks on America. "You played a role in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. Every place in the world, the men and women of the Patriot Wing have been a part of that," he said.

Colonel Farris concluded with a reminder that the retirees left a legacy to the wing. "You trained and motivated people to take your place. You can be proud of that. Everyone here should shake your hand and the hands of your families for your role in Westover and our country," he said.

Among those who came back to Westover was retired Chief Master Sgt. George P. Kudla. "There is no better place in the world than the 439th Airlift Wing," he said. "There are always new challenges, but the tradition will continue and I have been proud

for over 30 years to be part of it," the chief said.

For retired Master Sgt. Michael E. Allen, who drove here from Plattsburgh, N.Y., the Patriot Wing will always represent a high point in his life. He joined the 439th Civil Engineering Squadron firefighters after serving at Griffiss AFB, N.Y. and served with them in Kuwait in 2002.

"That was the pinnacle of my military career. They were great people to work with," he said. "Thanks for having me back and thanks for being there for me over the years."

The ceremonies concluded with the reading of names of Patriot Wing members who have passed away during the past year. Senior Airman Leanne Sambrook honored those Airmen the Patriot Wing has lost with the singing of Amazing Grace.

PATRIOT PUNS

BY MASTER SGT. W.C. POPE

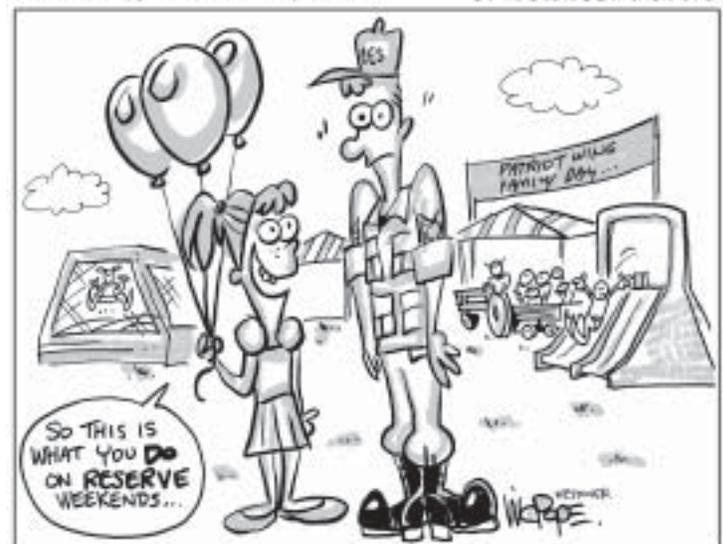




photo by Staff Sgt. Paul Flipse

Senior Airman AshLee C. Coye

Patriot People

EDITOR'S NOTE: Civilian employees at Westover are also featured quarterly in this section. People wishing to submit reservists or civilians for "Patriot People" are encouraged to call the Patriot editor at Ext. 2020 to arrange publication. Photos of people on the job are requested.

Name: AshLee C. Coye
Rank: Senior airman
Age: 22
Hometown: Ravena, N.Y.
Unit: 58th Aerial Port Squadron
Position: Air transportation apprentice
Civilian position: Patient care associate/nursing student
Favorite food: Mom's spaghetti
Years of service: Two
Favorite sport: NASCAR – #20 Tony Stewart
Favorite hobby: Photography
Ideal vacation: Endless time/resources to explore National Parks
Best way to relax: Hiking Mt. Greylock
Preferred entertainment: Listening to the radio
Favorite hero: John Wayne
Favorite music: Country
Favorite movie: Shrek II
Favorite aircraft: A-10 Warthog
Pet peeve: Loud gum-chewing
What I would do if I won \$1 million: Invest it for retirement

Selected for promotions:

Lieutenant colonel

- Michael J. Barden
- Oneida D. Blagg
- Richard M. Cockley
- Juan Galindez
- Douglas R. Gernhard
- Matthew D. Llodra
- Jeffrey S. Mullen
- Eric L. Pennell
- Vincent A. Orlando
- Steven M. Thompson
- Elaine E. Tucci

(Chaplain) Maj. William Wiecher

Captain

- Matthew C. Dunphy
- Sherman, Stephen E.
- Romanoff, Maria R.

- Chaplain (Capt.) Jeffrey A. Ballou
- Sean D. McGrath
- Patricia A. Blake
- John S. Defina

PEP promotions:

- Senior Master Sgt. Nicole Remy
- Master Sgt. Eileen Moloney-Cook
- Tech. Sgt. Katie MacVeigh

Patriot Praises

Awards and Decorations

Meritorious Service Medal

- Master sergeant
- Ronald L. Barton
- Michael W. Crochiere
- Teresa L. Culpepper
- Virginia M. Griffin
- Charmaine M. Mallett
- Anita L. Schmitz

- Technical sergeant
- Thomas G. Devane
- Christopher F. Kellam
- Stanley E. Merrill

Air Force Commendation Medal

Chief Master Sgt. Michael J. Dupell

- Master sergeant
- James E. Boucher*
- Daniel E. Ehlers**

Technical sergeant

- Jeffrey A. Green
- Joni M. Thomas

Staff Sgt. Eduardo R. Monita

Senior Airman Christopher J. Beaulieu

Air Force Achievement Medal

Technical sergeant

- Terry Burkner
- Brian F. McNutt

Staff sergeant

- David M. Aucoin
- Thomas Fuchs
- Chris Tobin

Senior Airman Jodi L. Habbinger

- * first oak leaf cluster
- ** second oak leaf cluster

USAF Band to jazz things up in Springfield

The USAF Band will perform Oct. 19 at 7:30 p.m. at Cathedral High School in Springfield, Mass. For ticket information, please contact the public affairs office at (413) 557-3500 or (413) 557-2020.

MISSIONS continued from Page 3

The C-5s picked up Federal Emergency Management Assistance search and rescue teams and airlifted them to Lafayette, La. In addition, a C-5 flew to Louis B. Armstrong Airport in New Orleans and ended up carrying one of the most unusual payloads in the wing's history – people. The crew was directed to airlift 200 evacuees to Fort Smith, Ark.

Crew members strapped all 200 of the men, women, and children onto the floor of the cargo deck.

Westover crews launched five of the nine missions during the long Labor Day weekend. Assisting in the launches were maintenance and aerial port reservists, and civilian employees with Phoenix Management Inc., handling 24-hour operations with the weather office, transportation, supply, and base operations.

Also over the Labor Day weekend, four 439th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron reservists deployed to New Orleans. The Patriot Wing members, who got the call Sept. 2 from Air Force Reserve Command headquarters, were part of an eight-member aeromedical evacuation command squadron. They departed Westover Sept. 3. Members at MacDill AFB, Fla., and Lackland AFB, Texas, augmented the reservists.

The AES members were Maj. John K. Crotty, AES director of administration; Maj. Bryan W. Castle, flight nurse; Master Sgt. James M. Flynn, NCOIC mission management, and Senior Airman Daniel C. Warren, EMS coordinator.

In addition, 18 439th Security Forces Squadron members were scheduled to be deployed to New Orleans in mid-September for 60 days to guard Department of Defense aircraft at the Louis B.



photo by Tech. Sgt. Andrew Biscoe

GEAR CHECK -- Master Sgt. Jon-Gary Williams, 439th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron crew chief, inspects the landing gear of the C-5 shortly after arrival at March ARB, Calif., Aug. 30. The Galaxy airlifted two Federal Emergency Management Agency teams to Lafayette Regional Airport, Lafayette, La.

Armstrong Airport. This was the squadron's first support of a Hurricane Katrina mission. The 439th SFS was among five AFRC units which were tasked.

EVACUEES continued from Page 3

of them said that was the best sleep they've had in a week," said Tech. Sgt. Stephen P. Allen, a crew chief from the 439th Maintenance Squadron.

Every evacuee had a story of pain, despair and desperation. Children told heartbreaking eyewitness accounts of people dying. Dozens of evacuees asked the crew if help to find loved ones would be available. Wives, husbands, parents...even children...were missing. "Will we be able to call home? Can people call us in Arkansas?" they asked.

When the crew had nothing left to give their passengers, they gave compassion. After Sergeant Allen saw an elderly woman, noticeably trembling in fear and crying, he approached her.

"I asked her if she was OK. She said she had never flown before and was terrified of flying," said Sergeant Allen. "I promised her everything would be all right and I'd help," he said, "and I held her hand and stayed with her throughout the flight."

According to crew members, Sergeant Allen is too modest. "He didn't just

hold her hand - he held her in his arms and rocked her like a baby! It was incredible. He got her through it the flight," said Tech. Sgt. Daniel J. Howard, 439th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron.

Crew members insist they were just doing their job and were grateful to help, but the evacuees see it as much more.

The passengers broke out in a roar of cheer when the plane reached its destination. For them, the flight was no ordinary mission; it meant getting a chance at life anew. It was their flight of hope.

PATRIOT

www.afrc.af.mil/439aw

October UTA schedule
A UTA Oct. 1-2
B UTA Oct. 15-16



439th AW/PA
WESTOVER AIR RESERVE BASE
100 Lloyd Street
East Wing, Suite 103
CHICOPEE, MA 01022-1825

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Published monthly for Patriots like Senior Airman Jeffrey S. Burgess, Orange, Mass., and 2,442 reservists of the 439th AW at Westover ARB, and the wing's geographically separated unit.