

# PATRIOT

439TH MILITARY AIRLIFT WING • AIR FORCE RESERVE • WESTOVER AFB



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## EDITORIAL

## The hardest jobs of all

During Operation Desert Storm, nearly 200,000 members of the reserve and national guard were called to active duty.

The Air Force Reserve activated approximately 19,500 of its personnel. Of that number, 1,533 reservists--or more than 15 percent of those recalled--were stationed at Westover.

As Brig. Gen. Mike Walker, 439th Military Airlift Wing commander, notes, the Patriot Wing was unique because it was mobilized as a unit to operate the Desert Shield and Desert Storm stage operation here. No other AFRES wing was activated as a large entity, and Westover was the only stage base in the world which was run exclusively by reservists.

Although some of Westover's citizen-airmen have been serving in the Persian Gulf, and 337th MAS aircrews fly there daily, most Westover personnel have been doing their jobs each day right here in the Pioneer Valley.

The work hasn't been glamorous. Hollywood won't make any movies about the men and women who worked 12-hour days helping passengers, typing reports, cooking meals, loading cargo, driving buses, fixing airplanes or guarding the flightline.

The work often consisted of tiring, boring, nitty-gritty chores--precisely the kind of tasks that fire the engines of the largest military airlift effort in history.

The fact that many Westover personnel stayed at the base and didn't see combat or "serve in the sand" doesn't really matter.

"I have the greatest respect for those who stay behind to serve," said Maj. Gen. John J. Closner, chief of the Air Force Reserve, after a visit to Westover in February. "In many ways, they have the hardest jobs of all. It doesn't go unnoticed."

General Closner believes that the worth of our efforts is readily apparent. He said that when Westover reservists look back on their Desert Storm service "they'll recognize that they have made a significant contribution."

The brave men and women who have been returning here from the desert, and the dedicated aircrews who've been flying to the Gulf since last August, depended in many different ways on Patriot Wing members.

The history of Desert Storm will reveal that we didn't let them down.

That, more than anything else, makes doing the hardest jobs worth it.

by Maj. Rick Dyer  
Public Affairs Officer

## Briefs

### Suggestion awards

Five Westover reservists and civilian employees recently earned awards totalling \$875 for suggestions which saved time and money on the job.

Susanne Schmidt, manager of the Westover suggestion program, announced awards to MSgt. Donald Vadnais, 439th FMS, \$250; SSgt. Janis Watson, 439th AMS, \$250; John Diffley, \$250; Edwin Driscoll, \$75; and Donald Sapowsky, \$50.

### Dental support

A Hartford, Conn. dental office is offering free emergency dental care for Desert Storm military dependents.

Dr. Francis Cleary, a dentist with Drs. Stephen Bellorini and Jeffrey Burns, also serves as a lieutenant with the Navy reserve.

"I would like to make sure that dependents with emergency dental need have someone to turn to," he said. Interested family members should contact the dental office at (203) 246-2616 for information and directions.

Doctor Cleary is working with the Connecticut State Dental Association to recruit other Connecticut dentists and to possibly broaden treatment options through a discount system. Further information will be published when available.

# PATRIOT

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### On front page:

HOME -- Capt. Rosemary Costa, a flight nurse with the 74th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron, hugs a friend in Westover's Base Hangar moments after she returned to the base in March from Desert Storm duty in Saudi Arabia.

(photo by TSgt. Sandi Michon)



## As others return, Westover's ALCF heads for the sands of Saudi

by TSgt. Tom Allocco

While others were celebrating homecomings, the Westover ALCF team was packing its bags for deployment to the Middle East.

Nine members of the 439th Airlift Control Flight left Westover at 2 a.m. March 31 aboard a C-141 aircraft bound for Saudi Arabia. They are serving at a desert airbase in Saudi Arabia, coordinating the massive airlift of Desert Storm troops and cargo returning to the United States.

Lt. Col. Robert McMillan is leading the team of operations officers, NCOs and loadmasters who will relieve active duty members. He is commanding a 200-member ALCE team which expects

to remain overseas until most of the redeployment is completed.

"We want to get the troops back as fast as possible, said Colonel McMillan. The war might be over, but the redeployment is just beginning."

The Westover team members joined others who have been working 12-hour shifts with few days off and living in a tent city.

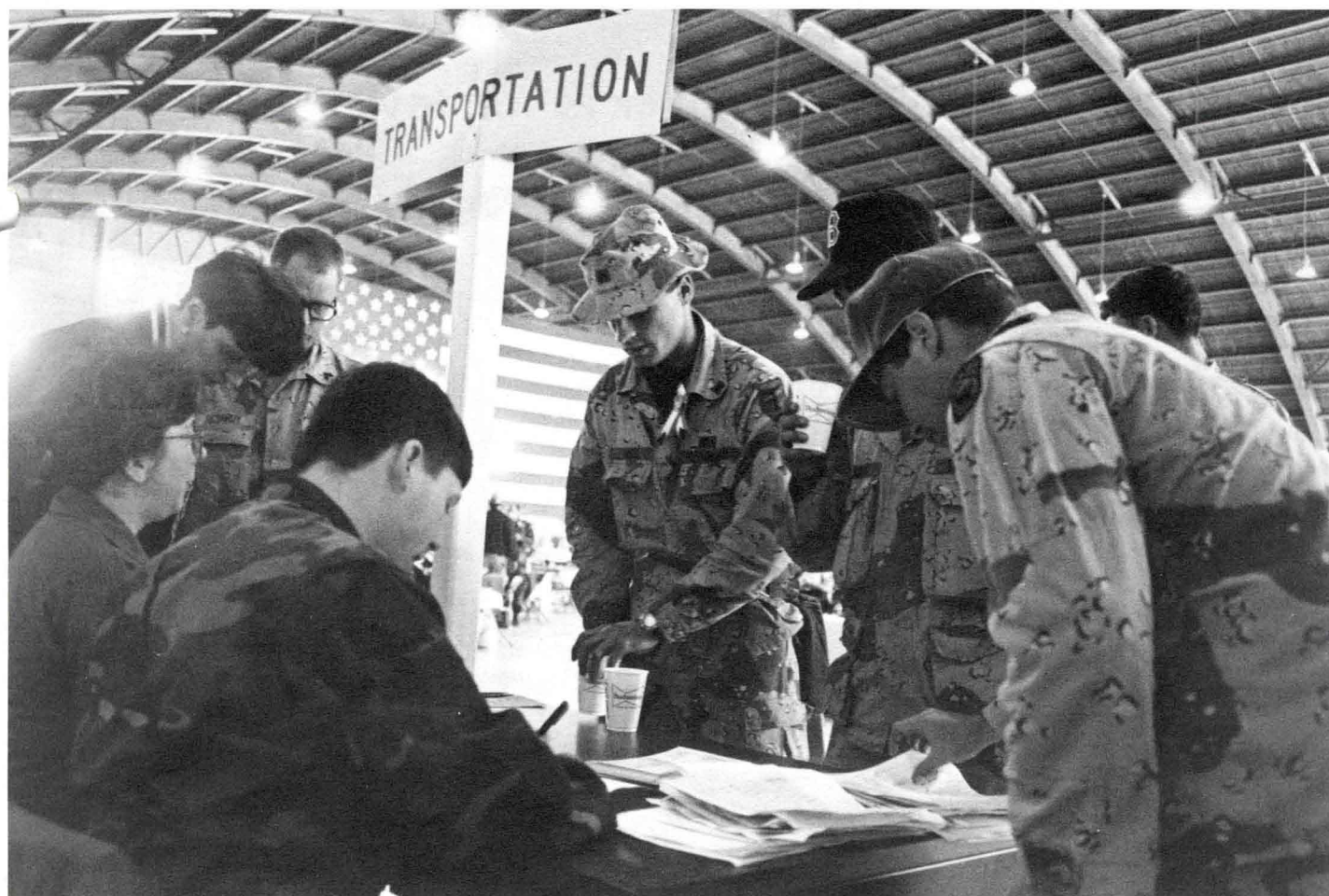
"The sooner we get them (the Desert Storm troops) home, the sooner we can return," Colonel McMillan added. "Having been involved in sending them off to war, it will be nice to now help get them back."

The forward operating base where the Westover personnel are stationed was very active and suffered the loss of

aircraft during Desert Storm. The desert airbase is now a central point for Allied ground forces and equipment being shipped aboard military and civilian aircraft.

Other members of the Westover ALCF team are operations officers Maj. Wayne Petitto and Maj. Thomas Mauzaka; operations NCOs MSgt. Fred Frani, MSgt. Bob Seaton and TSgt. Jim St. Cyr; and loadmasters SMSgt. Frank Ruotolo, MSgt. Tom O'Brien and TSgt. Greg Morin.

Colonel McMillan said that the Westover ALCF team members would appreciate receiving mail during their desert deployment. Their address is: 4410 OSW/439 ALCF/USAF, APO, N.Y. 09768.



(photo by Sgt. Christine Mora)

**FINAL LEG --** Marilyn Caldwell, Westover's Traffic Management Officer, lends a hand while MSgt. Debra Walsh and SSgt. Richard Smith coordinate commercial transportation for a group of Desert Storm men homeward bound. Many of the returning troops who first touch

American soil at Westover rush to the TMO desk to arrange the final leg of their journey home. According to Mrs. Caldwell, her people have been working 12-hour shifts to process the huge influx of passengers needing help. "We processed more than 700 people in just one week."



# War a personal matter for British airman in the Gulf

by TSgt. Tom Allocco

IN THE PERSIAN GULF--The War in the Gulf became a personal matter for Senior Aircraftsman Dave Letch and other members of the British Royal Air Force's XV Squadron.

Westover personnel had the chance to meet with the British maintenance technician when they flew a C-5 cargo transport mission to the Persian Gulf in February.

When allied planes swept across Iraq in the initial air assault against Saddam Hussein, SAC Letch and the others in his unit lost friends.

"We've lost two Tornados (British fighter bombers)," he said.

"Another squadron on station lost another." When asked about it, he looked away and his voice dropped to a monotone.

He and others in his squadron became embittered when they watched television broadcasts of POWs who had been brutalized by the Iraqis. One of the prisoners was Flight Lieutenant John Peters, the British Tornado pilot who was filmed sitting twisted, unable to lift his head or left shoulder.

"I know the guy. He is a friend of mine," SAC Letch said.

The XV Squadron and its sister unit, XVII Squadron, arrived in the Gulf from Germany in November.

The 23-year old aircraft mechanic, of Dorset, England, shares a two-man room in a hotel near the airfield where he is assigned. SAC Letch said that he works 12-hour shifts, six days a week repairing the powerful Tornado's jet engines.

At the time the Westover aircrew flew to the base where he is stationed, the allied nations were conducting a blistering air war against Saddam Hussein's forces, and the ground operation had not yet begun.

"The Tornados seem to be doing quite well. Most have done over 50 bombing sorties each," he said.

"It sounds as though we're winning. I hope so," he said. He added that morale within his unit is "quite good, all things considered...it's a unique situation to be in, I suppose."

What difficulties did he and his fellow members confront?

"There's a bloody war on, for starters...bloody unsociable hours," SAC Letch said.

His sympathy goes out to the ground forces in the desert. "We've got it better here than they do," he said.

"Let's hope this bloody war is over soon," he added.

## Penpal finds needle in a haystack at Westover's Base Hangar

by Maj. Rick Dyer

Nine-year-old Jason Schoolcraft found a needle in a haystack March 29 when he met Buddy Bowens in Westover's Base Hangar.

Last September, the West Springfield fifth-grader sent a package addressed to "any service member" in the Persian Gulf.

The "goodie box," which contained a camera, board games and other gifts,

was flown there aboard a C-5 piloted by Maj. Dave Doyle of Westover's 337th Military Airlift Squadron.

Jason's package was received by MSgt. Raymond "Buddy" Bowens, a 22-year Air Force veteran who had been stationed in the desert since Aug 30.

Sergeant Bowens, a member of the 7th Mobile Aerial Port Squadron from McChord AFB, Washington, dashed off a thank you note to Jason. The two became penpals, corresponding fre-

quently over the past seven months.

On Good Friday, they met face-to-face at Westover when Sergeant Bowens landed at Westover during a brief stop on his trip home from the desert.

"I never thought I'd meet him," said Jason, who was driven hurriedly to the base by his mother, Nancy, after Sergeant Bowens called to say that he had landed nearby.

"We didn't think there was a shot in the world that he'd come through this base," said Nancy Schoolcraft.

The five-minute meeting almost didn't happen. Sergeant Bowens was only at Westover for about an hour, and was about to leave for his flight home when the Schoolcrafts entered the hangar.

Sergeant Bowens, the father of four children, recognized Jason from a photograph which the boy had mailed him. They chatted briefly, and the sergeant gave his young friend a coin from the United Arab Emirates, and the American flag patch which he had worn on his desert fatigues.

The McChord NCO said he deeply appreciated the frequent notes that he received from the boy.

"Mail was very important to us," the sergeant, a Vietnam veteran, said. "It was what everybody looked forward to. You had a bad day when you didn't get any mail."



(photo by TSgt. Don Talbot)

**PENPALS** --MSgt. Raymond "Buddy" Bowens of the 7th MAPS at McChord AFB, Wash., greets his penpal Jason Schoolcraft, and his mother Nancy, March 29 in the Base Hangar.



## St. Patrick's Day reunion overwhelms ex-42nd APS officer

by Maj. Rick Dyer

There weren't any leprechauns, but there were plenty of giant green airplanes and smiling faces at Westover on St. Patrick's Day.

One of the broadest grins belonged to Capt. J.D. Smith of Pensacola, Fla., one of the 523 returning Desert Storm troops who landed here Sunday, March 17.

Captain Smith, a navigator aboard AC-130 gunships with the 919th Special Operations Group from Duke Field, Fla., arrived here after spending seven weeks in the Persian Gulf. But unlike many of the arriving veterans, he was quite familiar with Westover.

From 1985 to 1987, the captain served as a reservist and transportation officer with the then 42 MAPS. When he walked through the door of the Base Hangar, many of his old buddies from the base were on hand to greet him.

"We've been looking for him since the war started," said CMSgt. Bob Adams, air transportation manager with the 42nd APS. "We knew that his unit was activated, and we have been keeping a vigil. We were thrilled to see him."

Captain Smith left Westover in 1987 to attend law school in Florida. He graduated last May, and had been practicing law for just six months when the 919th SOG was mobilized and sent to Saudi Arabia.

He flew several combat missions during the war with Iraq, and endured the hardships of what he described as a "bare bones" airbase in the desert.

"When we arrived, there were some tents," Captain Smith said.

"We spent the first week there filling



(photo by Sgt. Christine Mora)

**REUNITED --** CMSgt. Bob Adams of the 42nd APS (left) was reunited with Capt. J.D. Smith at Westover. Captain Smith is a former transportation officer with the 42nd APS and landed here on his way home from Desert Storm duty.

sandbags for bunkers and putting up additional tents. Then we went to the dump to scavenge wood for furniture."

The former Westover reservist said that the living conditions forced his unit members to constantly improvise. "We welded some scrap metal into weights and then we had a gym," he said.

But on St. Patrick's Day, the Air Force Academy graduate wasn't thinking much about the desert. He was simply glad to be back in the U.S.A and on his old turf.

"This is overwhelming," he said shortly after being welcomed by throngs of

cheering well-wishers who jammed the Base Hangar. "No one expected anything like this."

Captain Smith, a veteran of 14 years military service, stayed overnight in Chicopee. His unit left here for Duke Field shortly after 1 p.m. the next day.

He said that he was anxious to return to his family in Florida and to resume his practice as a civil trial lawyer. But he'll undoubtedly always remember St. Patrick's Day, 1991.

"It was so great being reunited with my friends from the 42nd," he said.

## Herky homecoming

Westover became a C-130 base again--at least for a few days in April.

Sixteen Hercules aircraft--from Niagara's 914th TAG and Selfridge ANGB's 927th TAG--landed here enroute from the Persian Gulf April 9-10.

The two units had served in the Gulf since late last summer, combining to form the 1650th Tactical Airlift Wing (Provisional).

Later that week, Westover played host to returning C-130 units from West Virginia, Texas and Arkansas.

## Westover welcome overwhelms Texans

Kelly AFB, Texas -- Fifty-three members of the 6948th Electronics Security Squadron and Air Force Electronic Warfare Center received a hero's welcome at Westover AFB March 18.

The Kelly personnel, enroute back to Texas after deployment in the Persian Gulf, carried home fond memories of their brief but happy stay at Westover.

"I was truly overwhelmed," said Leonard Battle from Houston Texas. "When we stopped at Westover, it was after midnight with temperatures in the upper 20's, yet more than 500 people greeted us. They poured out so much love that they really made us feel like heroes."





(photo by TSgt. Sandi Michon)

**MOMMY'S HOME--** MSgt. Kathleen Voiland's red carpet walk was not complete until she was mobbed by her four children and husband in a tearful reunion. The 74th AES med tech's biggest challenge was trying to hug all four children at once.



(photo by SSgt. Vin Blanchard)

**LIEUTENANT GREETSS SERGEANT--**Mass. Lt. Governor Paul Cellucci was on hand at the Base Hangar to welcome home SSgt. Mark E. Levesque shown with his wife Catherine and their son.

## Red Carpet Welcome

by Maj. Rick Dyer

The burly young Marine, still desert-weary in his chocolate chip BDUs, walked along the red carpet and shook hands with a crowd of well-wishers.

He stopped and bent down to hug a little boy, whose name he didn't know, but whose face he'll probably never forget.

"How ya doin' little buddy?" he said to the flag-clutching five-year-old.

"Welcome home," said the little boy, returning the embrace.

By now, the desert weariness was gone, and the big marine was beaming.

Since March 8, scenes like that have been repeated around the clock in Westover's Base Hangar as the men and women who liberated a nation and rekindled America's spirit are welcomed home.

The base--which watched somberly as nearly 32,000 troops passed through Westover enroute to the Persian Gulf-- has switched gears to give a hero's welcome to each of the returning Desert Storm troops.

During the three weeks since Iraq was defeated and a cease-fire was implemented, more than 10,000 American soldiers, sailors, marines and airmen have returned from the sand to Westover.

They've all been greeted with cheers, beers, hot dogs, hamburgers and hugs by a sea of well-wishers who pack the hangar throughout the day and night.

"It's like a dream, I didn't expect it," said Spec.5 Raymond Arnold of Austin, Texas. "It brought tears to my eyes."

Capt. Jim Boothe, a nurse supervisor with the 883rd Medical Group of Holloman AFB, N.M., said that he was amazed by the Westover welcome. "It's the most sensational feeling," he said. "To know that people care--that much makes it all worth it."

Captain Boothe, who spent seven months in the Persian Gulf and served during the Vietnam era, contrasted his welcome here with the way returning GIs were treated two decades ago.

"There was no reception after Vietnam," he said. "You couldn't even wear your uniform."

A1C Darcy Hutchinson, also of the 883rd Medical Group, had only been in the Air Force for a short while before being sent to Saudi Arabia for seven months. She said that the Westover wel-



come helped convince her that her desert days were finally over.

"I really felt like I was back in America," said the nineteen-year-old medical technician. "My first reaction was that I wanted to cry."

Word about the Westover reception is apparently spreading among the troops overseas. The command post at Torrejón AB, Spain (one of the European stage bases for the Desert Storm airlift) has reportedly posted a sign which reads: "We know that you want to go to Westover."

Despite the growing reputation which the homecoming celebration has earned, and a short briefing which the returning troops get when they land here, some of the desert vets appear overwhelmed by the reception they receive.

"Somebody mentioned something about a beer wagon, but no one said anything about the people," said TSgt. Lynn "Moon" Mullins of the 354th Civil Engineering Squadron from Myrtle Beach, S.C. "I tried to walk (down the red carpet) as fast I could so that I

wouldn't get too choked up."

Since the cease-fire, the base has been inundated with calls from people wishing to volunteer to greet the troops or make donations to the celebration.

During weekend nights in March, as many as 2,000 local citizens have jammed the Base Hangar to wave flags and cheer the returning heroes.

Each time the door opens and the arriving troops file in to the strains of Lee Greenwood's "I'm Proud To Be An American", the crowds erupt. Shouts of "welcome home" and "way to go" reverberate throughout the big hangar, which sports more red, white and blue than a flag factory.

President Bush has said that the troops will return from the Gulf at the rate of 5,000 per day. During several days in March, Westover welcomed nearly 1000 service members during a 24-hour period.

Although it is uncertain how long the returning veterans will be landing, Westover officials have pledged that they will keep the homecoming celebration going until the last one lands here.



(photo by TSgt. Sandi Michon)

**ALLEN OF ARABIA**--Sgt. Wayne Allen, 74th AES aeromed evac specialist, is home.



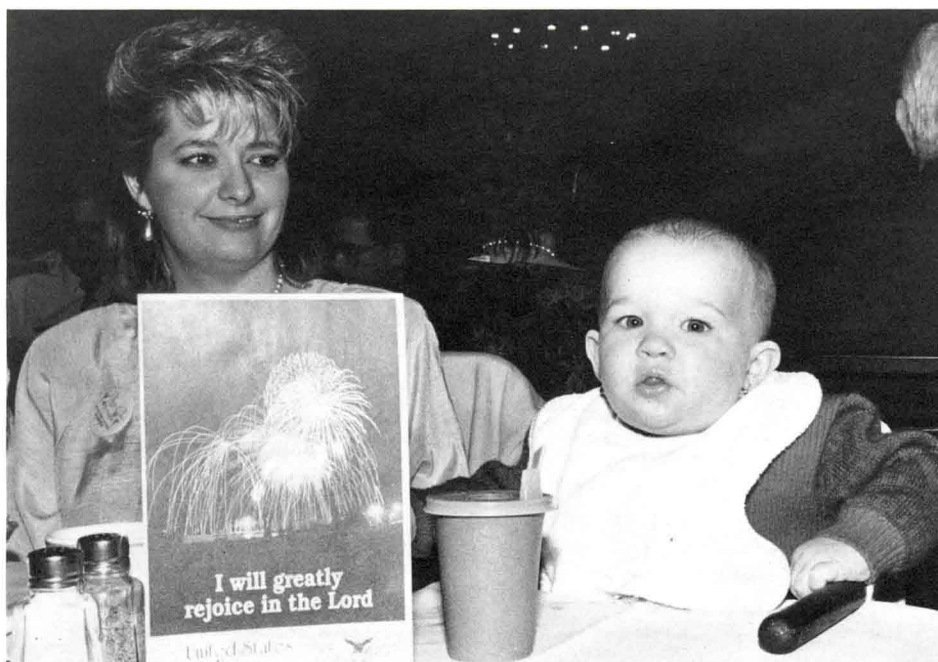
(photo by TSgt. Tom Allocco)

**FAMILY EMBRACE**--Ed and Penny Cocking of South Easton, Mass. welcome their son, Marine Corporal Ronald Hyson. He served with an anti-tank unit in the battle of

Khafji and the liberation of Kuwait. He is returning to his wife and daughter at Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii where he is stationed with the Third Marine Division.



## Ecumenical luncheon brings 74th AES families together



**DADDY'S LITTLE GIRL--** TSgt. Eugene Dumont's 15-month-old daughter, Brittany, attended the 74th luncheon with her mom, Diane and three-year-old brother, Steven. Sergeant Dumont made the day extra special by arriving home later that day creating an emotional family reunion.

### Article and photos

by TSgt. Sandi Michon

What began as an ecumenical lunch to pray for the 74th AES members serving in Europe and the Persian Gulf, turned into a thanksgiving gathering celebrating the war's end and the expected return of the troops. As if on cue, seven 74th members returned to Westover later that same afternoon.

More than 200 military and family members attended the luncheon held March 10 at noon at the Consolidated Open Mess. The audience was sprinkled with babies and children whose moms or dads were away from home for the war effort.

After the greeting by Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Sandy VanNorden, and Scripture reading, MSgt. George Gadbois, 74th AES first sergeant, began a candle-lighting ceremony by saying, "This first candle being lit represents each one of us here as we pray for our loved ones overseas."

He passed the flame to Mrs. Gus Bailey who recognized all the husbands and wives overseas who then lit Elizabeth DeGrace's candle who recog-

nized her dad, MSgt. Ricardo DeGrace and all the other dads. Jeffrey Wheeler, age 9, said his candle stood for his mom, 1st Lt. Judy Wheeler, and all the moms working in the military, "May they be home soon," he said.

As Mrs. Christine Curley, wife of Col. Joseph Curley and mother of Sgt. Michael Curley lit her candle, she stood to represent the sons and daughters and all other relatives who were activated in the 74th.

As the five stood with burning candles, the *Star Spangled Banner* played and all were invited to sing along. Tears streamed and cracked voices joined the song, giving expression to the pain of separation.

As plates emptied, conversations increased as family members traded experiences caused by the activation and deployment. As the list of those 74th reservists expected that afternoon was read to the crowd, there were loud cheers, especially from the families directly affected.

Five-year-old James Pineault couldn't wait to see his mom. James and

his father Peter Pineault were thrilled to learn of the family reunion soon to occur. "I sent a drawing of a trailer so my mom can remember what our house looks like," said James referring to their New Hampshire mobile home. "I draw pictures of Daddy and me for her," he said.

When asked how his wife's employment affected him, Peter let out an emotional sigh and said, "Oh God! I can safely say that you don't know how much you appreciate the one you love until this type of separation. Dad and son coped by sticking to their normal routines as much as possible, taking plenty of walks and avoiding television news coverage of the war.

Sergeant Gadbois was extremely pleased with the luncheon. "The response has been all positive. We're a very family-oriented unit and this really filled some needs of our families," he said.



**TOGETHER AT LAST--** Smiles tell the story as TSgt. Susan Pineault is unexpectedly reunited with her husband, Peter and son, James the same afternoon of the luncheon.





Allied Grocers -- \$21,000 in food supplies



Johnson Memorial Hospital -- \$1,309.17

## Helping Hands

As of March 26, the Westover chapter of the USO had received approximately \$59,000 in donations for the homecoming celebration. Scores of local businesses and organizations have also contributed food, beverages and other supplies.

Visitors to the Base Hangar will notice several donations made by Friendly Ice Cream, Nissen Bakery, Coca Cola, Pepsi Cola and many others.

"The outpouring of support from the communities in Massachusetts and Connecticut has been absolutely fantastic," said Brig. Gen. Mike Walker, commander of the 439th MAW. "We could not have done any of this without the tremendous support of the people and businesses who have been so generous."



Support Our Service People -- \$8,000



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# From Hartford to Chicopee: a journey of love

by Maj. Rick Dyer

Lorraine Taylor, a spunky Hartford, Conn., grandmother, wanted to be on hand to greet the troops who were returning from the desert to Westover. The fact that she lived nearly 40 miles away in another state and didn't own a car wasn't about to stop her.

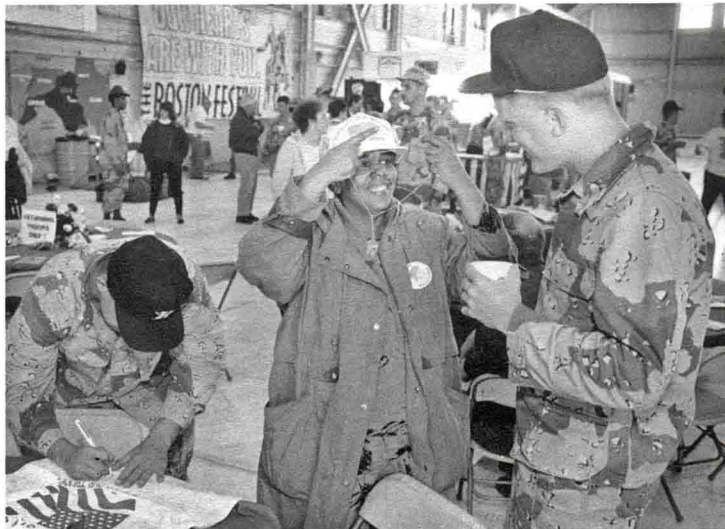
So Mrs. Taylor, who organized a drive in Hartford which resulted in hundreds of letters being sent to service members in Saudi Arabia, set out for Westover Tuesday, March 12.

Her first stop was at a local bank, where she withdrew some of her savings to buy a bus ticket. Then she boarded a bus in Hartford for the 45-minute drive up I-91 to Springfield.

From Springfield, another bus took her to the Fairfield Mall in Chicopee. Mrs. Taylor was walking from the mall toward Westover when a passerby stopped and drove her to the base.

Mrs. Taylor spent the entire day in the Base Hangar, waving an American flag and cheering her heroes as they walked down the red carpet in the hangar.

"I just love those troops...they did such a wonderful job," Mrs. Taylor said late that afternoon. "I had a beautiful day." A Westover worker who lives in Connecticut gave Mrs. Taylor a ride home Tuesday night.



(photo by Brooks Kraft)

**GREETINGS** -- Lorraine Taylor receives dogtags from Trent Gray of Austin, Texas, as she welcomes troops home in the Base Hangar.

## Hospitality wagon brings cheer to flightline troops

by SrA. Kymberly Taylor

For activated Desert Storm reservists working on the flightline, nights have been cold and twelve-hour shifts often seem endless.

Since Feb. 7, a 'hospitality wagon,' sponsored by the Desert Shield Support

Center, with the help of SSgt. Lori Boucher and about 35 local bakers, has brought relief in the form of a warm drink and home-baked treats.

Although it took a little while for the idea to catch on, "interest has really grown," said Sergeant Boucher. "At first, people didn't really know I was

there," she said, "but now they watch for me and when they see me coming the message goes out over flightline radios, 'the hospitality lady is here!'"

"We thought it would be nice to do something for the people working out on the line who may not have a chance to take a break or get warm," said Sergeant Boucher. "I go out at least every Monday and Thursday, once in the day and once in the evening, to the planes and the hangars. If I have goodies left over, I stop by the Command Post and Base Operations. Everyone has been really responsive to the program and to the volunteers who come out with me," she said.

Sergeant Boucher's government vehicle, adorned with a big, yellow ribbon with a red, white and blue center, carries coffee, tea and hot chocolate as well as home-baked 'goodies' and more nutritious snacks. "I like to make sure that I have apples, or cheese and crackers for people who may be watching their weight," said Sergeant Boucher. "Still, we probably go through 300 cookies and 50 cups of coffee on the average day."

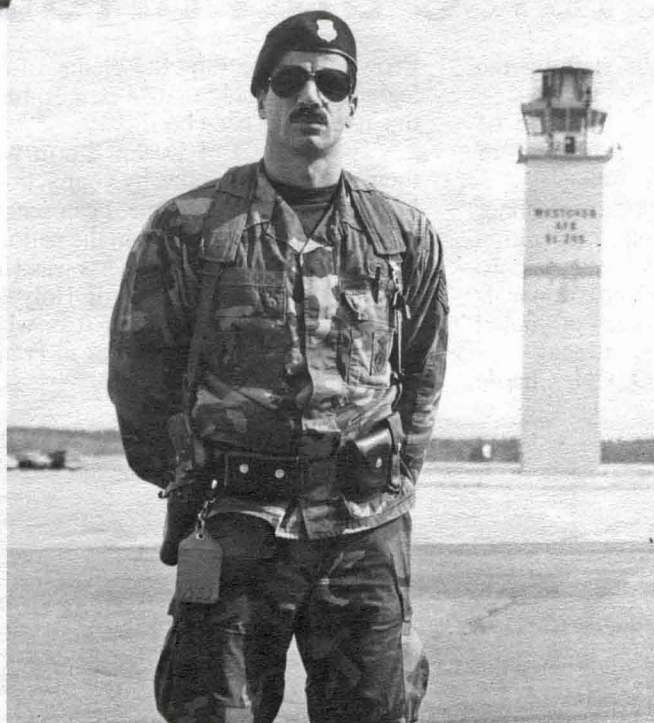
Sergeant Boucher said that special events, such as hot dog day, are planned for future hospitality excursions. "We want to keep things interesting," she said.



(photo by TSgt. Tom Allocco)

**BREAK TIME** -- OMS crew chiefs TSgt. David Cabana and SSgt. Tim Boyer take a welcome break at SSgt. Lori Boucher's "hospitality wagon."





## "Patriot People"

**Name:** George Louvitakis  
**Rank:** SSgt.  
**Age:** 36  
**Address:** West Warren, Mass.  
**Unit:** 439th SPS  
**Position:** Law enforcement specialist  
**Civilian position:** Tool maker/police officer  
**Favorite Food:** Swordfish  
**Years of Service:** 4  
**Favorite Sport:** Boxing  
**Favorite Hobby:** Weightlifting  
**Ideal Vacation:** Having fun with my kids  
**Best Way to Relax:** Quiet ride in the country  
**Preferred Entertainment:** Comedy  
**Favorite Celebrity:** Bart Simpson  
**Favorite Music:** Soft Rock  
**Favorite Book:** *Choir Boys*  
**Favorite Color:** Blue  
**Favorite Car:** Corvette  
**Pet Peeve:** "Crybabies"  
**Best Thing About Westover:** Dining facility  
**Worst Thing About Westover:** No military hops

## PAT on the back

### Reenlistments

CMSgt. Joseph F. Duffy  
 MSgt. Dennis R. Lendzioszek  
 MSgt. Edward J. Peplinski Jr.  
 TSgt. James C. Archer  
 TSgt. Ronald C. Baldwin  
 TSgt. Lillian M. R. Cote  
 TSgt. Scott A. Hoyt  
 TSgt. Ralph A. Jamieson  
 TSgt. David W. Kitchen  
 TSgt. David C. Pierrepont Jr.  
 TSgt. Edward J. Wall  
 TSgt. Jeffrey A. Whitehead  
 SSgt. Deborah E. Ash  
 SSgt. David A. Berkebile  
 SSgt. Daniel R. Ernst  
 SSgt. David J. Guzik  
 SSgt. Mark A. Kenyon  
 SSgt. John A. Kessler  
 SSgt. Robert R. Sneed Jr.  
 SSgt. Henry J. Stebbins III  
 SSgt. Christopher B. Szwed  
 SSgt. Daniel J. Turner  
 SSgt. Abram L. Winters  
 Sgt. Randy J. Bates  
 Sgt. John D. MacIntyre  
 Sgt. Edward R. O'Boyle  
 SrA. Robert L. Griffin  
 SrA. Christopher M. Sawyer  
 A1C Jeanine A. Gile

### Enlistments

SSgt. John B. Mahar  
 SSgt. Stephen A. Paris

SSgt. Roger P. Prinz  
 SSgt. Kevin F. Trombley  
 SSgt. Raymond D. Wills Jr.  
 Sgt. Warren A. Busseno  
 Sgt. Anthony C. Chapdelaine  
 Sgt. Michael P. Falcone  
 SrA. James P. Caplette  
 SrA. Theodore J. Chaloux  
 SrA. John R. Duval  
 SrA. James M. Felton  
 SrA. Lewis G. Head

SrA. Merrill R. Pregeant  
 A1C Cheryl A. Bachand  
 A1C Marysue Cirrincione  
 A1C Charles L. Emmons Jr.  
 A1C Laura J. Livingston  
 Amn. Raenita A. Wheelock  
 AB Keith M. Cosentino  
 AB Dwayne D. Jolicoeur  
 AB Richard B. Hartnett  
 AB Richard R. Saincalles  
 AB Diane A. Whelihan

## After ten years, Marine and sister reunited

The Base Hangar has been the scene of many joyful reunions, but none happier or more unexpected than that of a Marine and his sister after a 10-year separation last weekend.

Marine SSgt. Donald Cobb of Camp Pendleton, Calif. and his sister Betty Voltz of Springfield shared hugs and tears when they came together for the first time Saturday evening. Assignments at duty stations from Beirut to Okinawa had kept the Marine combat veteran and his sister separated for a decade.

Their reunion was as unexpected as it was joyful. It was only after

Sergeant Cobb was in the Base Hangar that he learned from a buddy how close Westover is to the Springfield home of his sister. A quick search through the phone book and a telephone call brought her rushing to the hangar.

They were able to spend an hour together amid the ongoing homecoming celebrations in the hangar before Sergeant Cobb left to rejoin his wife and two children in California.

Sergeant Cobb served with Task Force Grizzly, directing air and artillery fire during the advance into Kuwait.



# Parade promotes praise and pride

It was a time for flags, marching music, salutes and a few brief words of praise and pride when a March of Tribute honored the men and women of Desert Storm at Westover AFB March 9.

A strong, steady wind gave added dignity to the dozens of flags which pulled at poles gripped by marchers. Onlookers lifted arms to hat and heart in salute as the banners passed along the route from First Ave. to the Ellipse.

The area around the base flag was turned into a field of red, white and blue by Civil Engineers, Security Police, representatives of the Army, Navy and Marines, American Legionnaires, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Disabled American Veterans, Vietnam Veterans, the Springfield Kiltie Band, the Massachusetts State Police and others. Two A-10 Thunderbolts of the 104th TFG roared overhead.

About 1,000 marchers passed in review by Brig. Gen. Frederick D. Walker. The wing commander praised the efforts of those involved in Desert Shield/Storm at home and in the Gulf as "awesome...no other word describes it."

Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Sandy VanNorden offered a prayer in remembrance of those who fell, "so eager to live, too young to die."

Following taps and echo taps by the Marksmen Drum and Bugle Corps, the

flag was lowered to half staff by the Westover Honor Guard.

Maj. Richard Dyer, master of ceremonies, expressed the sentiments of all assembled.

"Today we march in tribute to honor the brave men and women of Operation Desert Storm, and all our veterans. To each of you, a grateful nation extends its sincerest thanks. And to each of you, at long last, welcome home," he said.

Vietnam War POW Lt. Col. Charlie

Brown led in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. He noted that "a new spirit of this nation has been born."

"The soldiers of Desert Storm won their war, but you folks, by your actions, have won the war at home. I can sense a new feeling of patriotism in the nation."

Among the honored guests was 102-year-old Leonard Hooten of Holyoke, who earned the Victoria Cross while serving with Canadian forces in France in World War I.



(photo by SSgt. Vin Blanchard)

**OLD GLORY--** Westover's honor guard, along with several other contingents, tightly clutched flagpoles strained by strong March winds. Approximately 1,000 marched in the March 9 March of Tribute.

## PATRIOT

Coming in May: Special welcome home edition



Published monthly for Patriots like Sgt. Tim Lapinski of Easthampton, Mass. and 2,385 members of the 439th MAW at Westover AFB.

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