



# WESTOVER today

439th Military Airlift Wing

February 26, 1991



**SURRENDER** – A long line of Iraqi prisoners surrender to advancing Allied forces Sunday in Kuwait. U.S. military officials have said more than

20,000 enemy troops had been taken prisoner during the first 48 hours of the ground offensive. *(photo courtesy of the Associated Press)*

## Allies storm Kuwait in massive ground battle

U.S. and Allied forces blasted Iraqi troops in the long-awaited ground offensive early Sunday morning, after Saddam Hussein failed to meet President Bush's deadline to withdraw from occupied Kuwait.

Military officials have called the assault the largest invasion since World War II as nearly 200,000 U.S.-led troops burst through Iraqi defenses along the 300-mile front and plunged 20 miles into Kuwait.

By early yesterday, an estimated 20,000 Iraqis had been taken prisoner and Allied casualties had been "extremely light" according to Gen. H. Norman Schwarzkopf, who gave no figures for U. S. dead or wounded.

"So far the offensive is progressing with dramatic success," General Schwarzkopf said. "We're going around, over, through, on top, underneath and any other way."

The general added that all the Allies' first day objectives were reached in the first 10 hours of fighting.

All Westover personnel who were serving in the Persian Gulf when the

ground offensive began were reported to be safe, according to base officials.

Eight 337th Military Airlift Squadron aircrews were "in the system," according to Lt. Col. Terrence Trent, 337th operations officer.

Capt. David Zamorski, operations officer with the 74th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron, said that 60 nurses and med techs from the unit were in the area of operation when the ground war began. The 74th AES personnel who provide in-flight patient care aboard C-130 and other military

cargo aircraft, are located at six or seven sites in the Persian Gulf. "Their spirits are high and everyone is fine," said Captain Zamorski.

At the Desert Shield Support Center, the staff was busy and it seemed that families were not surprised when the ground war began, according to Capt. Armand Tourangeau.

As accounts of the ground offensive broke, Westover garnered media attention as area news outlets sought a local angle on the fast-breaking story.

### ***Airlift business still booming***

As worldwide attention focused on the ground offensive which President Bush called the "final phase" of the effort to liberate Kuwait, Westover continued doing a thriving "airlift business". As of 8 a.m. Monday, the base had handled 26 aircraft--21 of them C-5 Galaxies--during the preceding 48 hours. Westover also processed a total of 112 passengers and 659 tons of cargo destined for the Persian Gulf war during that period. Since last August, 2,280 military aircraft, 31,083 passengers and 76,145 tons of cargo have passed through Westover enroute to the Middle East.

# ...**BULLETIN**

Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein said in a radio broadcast at 4 a.m. (EST) today that he was ordering his troops to withdraw from Kuwait.

U.S. military officials in Saudi Arabia said early this morning that there was evidence that the besieged Iraqi forces were beginning to pull out from Kuwait.

Since Saturday, Allied forces had been engaged in a massive ground war that had smashed through Iraqi defenses in both Iraq and Kuwait. Radio reports indicate that the coalition troops were poised to seize Kuwait City.

## **Medal to be awarded**

Pentagon officials announced last week that the National Defense Service Medal would be awarded to personnel who serve on extended active duty during Operation Desert Storm.

Eligibility criteria and other details will be available shortly at Air Force consolidated base personnel offices and will be published in a future edition of *WESTOVER today*.

## **Food Pantry Aided**

The shelves of the food pantry at Westover's Desert Shield Support Center are overflowing, thanks to the generosity of a Connecticut-based supermarket chain.

Allied Grocers Cooperative Inc./Shurfine Products recently donated 30,000 pounds of food products to the support center. The food, valued at approximately \$14,000, will be distributed free of charge to service members and dependents who have suffered financial hardships as a result of Operation Desert Storm.

# **Westover gets big boost from Big Y**

Westover got a big boost last week from Big Y Foods, Inc., a local corporation which operates 28 supermarkets in Massachusetts and Connecticut.

Big Y will sell 25,000 VIP Support the Families pins for \$2.00 each at its stores. All proceeds from the sales of the colorful pins will be donated for use by the Westover Desert Shield Support Center.

The support center provides assistance to military members serving in Operation Desert Storm,

and their families.

"The sale of pins is in direct response to our customers and employees asking for ways to demonstrate their support for our troops and their families," said Donald H. D'Amour, Big Y's chief executive officer.

The sales of the pins is an extension of the Operation Desert Storm Very Important Patriot (VIP) Program which was recently announced by 10 Western Massachusetts chambers of commerce. MSgt. John Sullivan, career advisor

technician with the 439th CSG, was instrumental in the creation of VIP--a program in which area merchants offer discounted services and products to Desert Storm personnel.

Big Y hosted a kick-off ceremony for the pin promotion at its Memorial Drive store Feb. 22. Brig. Gen. Mike Walker, 439th MAW commander, and Col. Thomas G. Hargis, 439th CSG commander, were among the dignitaries who attended the ceremony.

## **WESTOVER today**

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## **Briefly ...**

### **Prescription refills**

Active duty personnel who require prescription renewals for routine medications should contact the 439th USAF Clinic at least one week prior to the date when the refill is needed.

According to clinic officials, the lead time is necessary because the prescriptions are refilled at Hanscom AFB and then forwarded to Westover. For further information, contact the clinic at extension 3565.

### **New altars**

Carpenters from the 439th CES recently presented two altars to the chaplain's office.

Both altars, one contemporary and the other traditional in design, were built for use during religious services here. The altars are ecumenical and may be used during Catholic or Protestant worship. Formal dedication will take place in the near future.

MSgt. Mike Herens designed the altars and was assisted by MSgt. John Mailo, TSgt. Ray Fleury, and Randy Sojack.



# WESTOVER today

439th Military Airlift Wing

March 1, 1991

## CEASE-FIRE BEGINS; welcome planned

With Kuwait liberated and the Iraqi Army in tatters, President Bush declared victory in the Gulf War Wednesday night and announced a cease-fire.

"Kuwait is liberated. Iraq's army is defeated. Our military objectives have been met," the President said in a nationally televised address from the White House.

The cease-fire, which began at midnight Thursday, came just 100 hours after the United States and its allies unleashed a massive ground battle that devastated Saddam Hussein's army. The land war was preceded by a blistering aerial offensive against Iraq, which began on Jan. 16.

President Bush's announcement was greeted with joy and enthusiasm at Westover, which has been a major northeast stage facility for the Persian Gulf airlift since Iraq invaded Kuwait Aug. 2.

Brig. Gen. Mike Walker, 439th MAW commander, said yesterday that Westover would continue to be a very busy place for the next several months.

The base is expected to serve as the final destination for C-5 aircraft returning with troops and cargo from the Middle East. Some returning soldiers could arrive within the next week.

"It's speculation at this point, but we could see troops returning through here in the next few days," General Walker said.

A meeting was held at the base early Thursday morning to plan a welcome for the returning Desert Storm personnel.

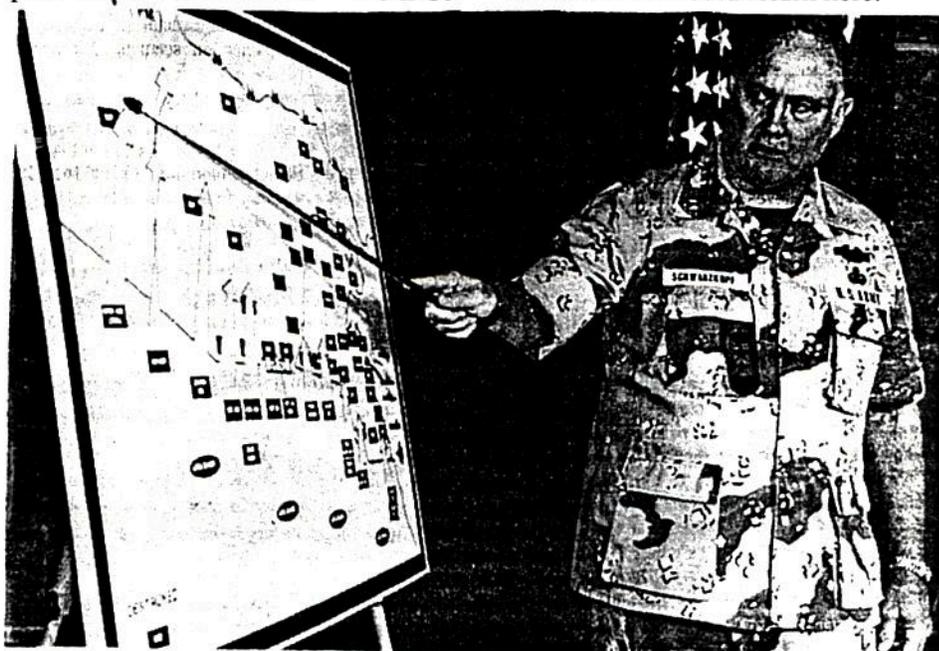
Since last August, more than 31,000 troops, and over 77,000 tons of military cargo, have been airlifted from Westover to the Persian Gulf.

Wednesday, the day the cease-fire was announced, 431 tons of Desert Storm cargo were processed at the base.

General Walker said Thursday that crews from Westover's 337th MAS would continue to airlift needed supplies to the Persian Gulf. "We'll be

involved in the supply effort there for as long as we're needed. We are going to be quite busy during the next few months."

Base officials said there was no information immediately available as to when Westover reservists stationed in the war zone would return here.



**ALLIED CHIEF--Gen. H. Norman Schwarzkopf, allied forces commander, briefs media representatives in Saudi Arabia on his successful strategy during the war to liberate Kuwait. (Photo courtesy of the Associated Press)**

### *To Iraq and back*

SSgt. Russell Shaw, 74th AES medical technician, on Tuesday called home from Saudi Arabia to say that he was about to go to Iraq to escort Iraqi prisoners of war on their way to camps. U.S. and Allied medical people have been assisting the tens of thousands of enemy POWs captured after surviving under conditions of bombardment, poor sanitary facilities, and shortages of food and water. Sergeant Shaw had been stationed in Riyadh since his arrival in the Middle East. The 60 members of the 74th AES in Saudi Arabia are divided into seven groups stationed in different areas of the country. Fifty squadron members are also stationed in Germany.

# Free tickets offered to NCAA championship final

Free tickets to one of the season's best collegiate basketball games will be available Monday at Westover.

Thanks to the generosity of some local businesses and individuals, military service members and their families will be given free passes to the NCAA Division II Men's Basketball National Championship game, which is scheduled March 23 at 2 p.m. at the Springfield Civic Center.

The tickets will be available on a first-come, first-served basis starting Monday at Westover's Desert Shield Support Center and the Base Gym.

The local championship committee, chaired by former Springfield Mayor William Sullivan, has worked with area citizens and corporations to provide the complimentary tick-

ets as a way of saying "thank you" to Desert Storm personnel and their families.

The Pioneer Valley Transit Authority will provide free round-trip transportation to the game. Buses will leave from the Base Gym at 12:30 p.m. on March 23.

CBS will broadcast the game on national television. A large number of free tickets have been donated for military service members and their families.

A press conference announcing the ticket contribution will be held Monday at the Basketball Hall of Fame in Springfield.

Further information is available from Capt. Tom Schwechheimer at extension 3958.

## Briefly...

### Active duty

The Air Reserve Personnel Center has announced that reservists on duty for Desert Shield/Desert Storm, including those on man days, are eligible to volunteer for extended active duty in the regular Air Force.

Reservists may apply for active duty under regulations outlined in AFR 33-3. The new policy waives a requirement that reservists serve on active duty for one year before being eligible to transfer to the active duty Air Force.

The numbers of those admitted under the program will be limited by active duty force reductions. Applicants will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

### Blood drive

A Red Cross blood drive will be held in the Base Gym from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday, March 11.

Capt. Thomas Schwechheimer, coordinator, has appealed for a strong turn-out from military and civilian members during the one-day blood drive. Reservations will not be necessary. For more information, call Captain Schwechheimer at ext. 3958.

### A.F. at Daytona 500

A Pontiac Grand Prix driven by Mickey Gibbs, serviced by Team III Racing, and representing the U. S. Air Force, surged to a 17th place finish in the 1991 running of the Daytona 500.

The Feb. 17 Florida classic featured

a field of 42 cars, with five representing each branch of the armed services.

### Comedy Shop

If laughter is the best medicine, then Westover's MWR has a potent prescription for you.

The "Original New York Comedy Shop" will appear at a comedy night March 16 at the Holyoke Holiday Inn featuring well-known comedians from HBO, Johnny Carson and others.

Tickets cost \$7, which includes bus fare to and from Westover which will leave the Consolidated Open Mess at 9 p.m. Tickets are limited, first come, first serve. Promoters promise that "you won't stop laughing."

For further details, call the base gym at extension 3958.

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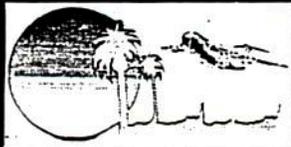
## Tribute march scheduled

Westover reservists will be joined by veteran and community groups in a March of Tribute and retreat ceremony honoring the men and women of Desert Storm on Saturday, March 9.

Led by Security Police and Civil Engineers, the formation will march from the Consolidated Open Mess to the Flag on the Ellipse at about 2 p.m. Ceremonies will include a pass in review, the playing of taps and echo

taps and recitation by all present of the Pledge of Allegiance. A-10 aircraft from Westfield's 104th TFG will fly overhead.

In addition to veteran and community groups, Westover military, civilian and dependent members have been invited to the ceremonies. Military members who wish to march may join during the forming up in the Consolidated Open Mess parking lot at 1:30 p.m. The uniform will be Class A.



# WESTOVER today

439th Military Airlift Wing

March 5, 1991

## War winds down, more Westover medics deploy

As the War in the Gulf wound down over the weekend, eight members of Westover's 439th USAF clinic left the base for Desert Storm service in California.

The eight--all enlisted medical assistants--will serve at the David Grant USAF Medical Center at Travis AFB, California. They were among the 26 reservists from the Westover clinic who were activated last week.

Serving at the California hospital will be TSgt. Louise M. Young, SSgt. Howard A. Crawford, SSgt. Dina T. Jeffers, SSgt. Luke T. Gelinis, SSgt. Albert D. Guzzo, SSgt. Ronald J. Labonte, SSgt. Robert M. Levesque, and Amn. Deborah J. Alfiero.

The medics deployed from Westover Saturday night aboard a C-130 aircraft.

As the clinic personnel were leaving, permanent peace in the war-torn Gulf region was becoming a reality, and Westover was preparing a homecoming for Desert Storm troops returning to the United States.

Gen. H. Norman Schwarzkopf, Allied commander, met Sunday with Iraqi military leaders at a desert airstrip in Southern Iraq to finalize a permanent cease-fire.

"I'm happy to tell you we agreed on all matters," General Schwarzkopf said after his historic meeting with representatives of the army which his forces had crushed in just 100 hours last week.

At Westover over the weekend, base officials started preparations for a "hero's welcome" which will greet troops returning here from the desert war.

Lt. Col. William Lee has been named project officer for the celebration, which has been nicknamed "Operation Patriot Home."

More than 31,000 military personnel were airlifted from Westover to the Persian Gulf since last August, and base officials believe that a large number of the troops will land at the base on their way home.

Last weekend, workers here began

preparing the passenger terminal in the base hangar to serve as a reception center for the returning veterans. Base officials want the returning Desert Storm troops, who are expected to arrive at all hours of the night and day, to receive a memorable welcome.



**SUPPORT OUR SERVICEPEOPLE --** Claire LaFlamme and Ernest LaFlamme, Support our Servicepeople co-chairmen, (center), donated \$8,000 at a ceremony at the Chicopee City Hall last week. Brig. Gen. Mike Walker, wing commander, and Capt. Denny Jobes, CBPO chief, accepted the donation for the Desert Shield Family Support Center.

## Desert Cooking

Six members of a Westover 439th CES Prime Ribs team were ecstatic last week when word of the cease-fire was announced. Since January 15, they've been stationed in Oman, operating a field kitchen which feeds Desert Storm troops stationed in that Persian Gulf nation.

The six--TSgt. Fred Cook, TSgt. Philip Lupien, SSgt. Gary Cormier, SrA. Paul Maratos, SrA. Clayton Muenchmeyer and A1C Alexander Walczyk--live in tents, work long hours and share many of the discomforts experienced by the desert troops they feed. Despite the demanding conditions, morale is high among the "desert cooks", according to Lt. Col. Wayne Booker, commander of the 439th CES.

# First Desert Storm veterans get rousing welcome

The first group of returning Desert Storm veterans landed to a hero's welcome at Westover Monday.

A C-5 carrying 20 Army members--most on emergency leave--touched down at the base at 10:51 a.m. Flag-waving Westover personnel, who had only 31 minutes advance notice of the arrival, greeted the arriving soldiers with cheers, beers and an old-fashioned barbecue.

"It's the first time a general has given me a beer," quipped one soldier after Brig. Gen. Mike Walker greeted the arriving troops with a case of brew.

The first Persian Gulf veteran to enter Westover's passenger terminal Monday was SFC Emilio Rivera Jr. of the 11th Air Defense Artillery Brigade from Fort Bliss, Texas. "It's great to be home," he said as he waded through a throng of well-wishers.

Sgt. Jimmy Jemison of the Alabama National Guard's 778th Maintenance Company was delighted by the reception. "It makes you feel appreciated," he said.

"It's Miller time," said Sgt. Myron Jones as he savored the first beer he's had since deploying to Saudi Arabia last September. Sergeant Jones, a 15-year Army veteran from Company A, 13th Signal Battalion at Fort Hood,

Texas told of an attack upon his unit's location by an Iraqi SCUD missile.

The SCUD was successfully intercepted by a U.S. Patriot missile, built by the Massachusetts-based Raytheon Corp. "I love that Patriot, it's a block buster," said Sergeant Jones.

Yesterday's homecoming was an early birthday present for Sgt. Stacy Costello of the Ohio National Guard's 1486 transportation company. Sergeant Costello, who will be 22 April 19, was returning permanently to the U.S. on medical leave and said that she was very happy with the Westover welcome.

The C-5 which brought the returning veterans to Westover after a nine-hour flight from Torrejon AB, Spain had originally been destined for Dover AFB, Del. It was diverted here on short notice Monday due to a change in mission requirements.

Yesterday's celebration was the first of many which Westover plans to host for returning Desert Storm troops. "No one will return from the sand without a hero's welcome," General Walker promised yesterday.

## PHONE HOME

557-HOME

A hotline has been established for persons who wish to volunteer at Westover for Operation Patriot Home--the effort to greet and thank returning Desert Storm veterans.

According to Lt. Col. William Lee, base homecoming coordinator, volunteers may call 557-HOME starting Wednesday.



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## Briefly...

### Nonsense at Club

The cast of the hit comedy "Nonsense", which is playing at the Coach Light Theater in East Windsor, Conn., will perform at the Westover Consolidated Open Mess Wednesday at 7 p.m.

The performance--a "mini-version" of the comedy--will be held in the club's dining room and is available free of charge to diners there.

The Consolidated Open Mess will also host a "DJ Party" Wednesday night from 7-11 p.m.

### Pantry needs help

Westover's Desert Shield Support Center needs your help in stocking its food pantry.

For the past several months, the center has operated the pantry to assist service members and their families who are experiencing financial hardship as a result of their service in Operation Desert Storm. Due to heavy demand, the food supply has been depleted recently.

Base personnel are urged to donate canned foods and other packaged edibles to the support center. Soups, cereals, canned tuna fish, peanut butter and other nutritious staples would be particularly appreciated.

Donations may be left at the Desert Shield Support Center which is located in Building 1310.

For further information about donations, or eligibility for assistance, contact the center at extension 2273.

### Easter Festival

A gala Easter Festival, sponsored by Westover's MWR, will be held at the base gym March 30 from noon until 4 p.m.

The festival will feature clowns, refreshments, contests, and an Easter egg hunt. Photos with the Easter Bunny, can be taken for \$1 each. For information, call extension 2328.

### POW Bulletin

Iraq released 10 Allied prisoners of war--including six Americans--early Monday morning. According to radio and television reports, the POWs were in the custody of the Red Cross and were being transported from Iraq to Jordan.



# WESTOVER today

439th Military Airlift Wing

March 8, 1991

## President Bush: they're coming home soon

President Bush addressed Congress Wednesday night, proclaiming victory over Iraq and announcing the return of American troops from the desert.

"As commander in chief, I can report to you that our armed forces fought with honor and valor," the president said. "As president, I can report to the nation that aggression is defeated. The war is over."

During his address, President Bush announced the first large-scale withdrawal of American forces from the Persian Gulf. The first unit--the 24th Mechanized Infantry Division from Fort Stewart, Ga.--was expected to leave Saudi Arabia several hours after the president's speech.

More than 530,000 Americans have served in the Persian Gulf since last August when Kuwait was invaded by Iraq. Nearly 32,000 of those troops were airlifted from Westover, which was the northeast stage area for Operation Desert Shield and Operation Desert Storm.

Even as President Bush was addressing Congress, base officials were preparing a "hero's welcome" for the returning Desert Storm veterans who are expected to land here aboard C-5 Galaxies and other military transports.

The base hangar is being converted into a "giant party zone" where the desert vets will be feted with food, drink and entertainment.

Area residents and corporations have lent their support to the celebration, volunteering in droves to assist at the homecoming, or to make donations.

Base officials report that a special homecoming "hotline"--557-HOME--has been ringing constantly since it was opened Tuesday.

The base had a tune-up for the



**WELCOME HOME --** Joanne Quinones, a reporter from Channel 40 in Springfield, interviews one of the first 20 troops to arrive home from the Persian Gulf who received a "hero's welcome" at Westover Monday.

### *Give a pint!*

Throughout Operation Desert Shield and Operation Desert Storm, members of the American Red Cross have always "been there" when Westover needed them. Red Cross volunteers staffed the base passenger terminal around the clock since last summer. They also provided invaluable assistance accepting donations for Westover, and lent a hand in countless other ways. Next week, Westover will have the chance to show appreciation to the Red Cross in a special way. The Red Cross is sponsoring a blood drive at the base gym Monday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Why not give a pint? It's a great way to say "thanks."

*(Continued on next page)*

# Westover will "march in tribute" Saturday

Westover will pay homage to the men and women of Desert Storm--and all U.S. veterans--with a "march in tribute" Saturday starting at 2 p.m.

Units from the 439th MAW will be joined by local veteran's organizations in a parade at the base which will culminate with a retreat ceremony at the elipse. Music will be provided by the Springfield Kiltie Pipe Band and the Marksman Alumni Drum and Bugle Corps of Springfield.

During the ceremony, A-10 "Warthogs" from the 103rd

Tactical Fighter Group of the Connecticut Air National Guard at Bradley IAP will perform a "flyover."

Capt. Robert Mooney, commander of Westover's 439th SPS, is coor dinating the event. Members of the 439th SPS and 439th CES will march in the parade, along with the Westover Color Guard and the color guards of several area veteran's organizations.

Brig. Gen. Mike Walker, 439th MAW commander will deliver the ceremony's keynote address.

## Briefly...

### Easter brunch

The Westover Consolidated Open Mess will offer an Easter Sunday Brunch from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on March 31. According to club officials, the brunch will feature a "buffet extravaganza", dinner music, and an Easter Bunny with candy for the children. Reservations are suggested. Call the Consolidated Open Mess at 593-5531 for reservations and further information.

### Stress seminar

The Desert Shield Support Center is sponsoring two stress management seminars.

The seminars will be held March

12 at 10:30 a.m. and March 26 at 7:30 p.m. at the support center (Building 1310). For more infor ation, call extension 2273.

### 14th AF Chief Visits

Maj. Gen. Dale Baumler, commander of 14th Air Force, arrived at Westover yesterday to view Desert Storm airlift operations.

During his two-day visit, General Baumler conferred with Brig. Gen. Mike Walker, 439th MAW commander, and other senior wing staff members. He will also tour Westover, and receive a briefing on the base's efforts to greet and honor returning Desert Storm veterans.

### Ice cream social

The children's play group at the Desert Shield Support Center will be

treated to an ice cream social Sunday from 2-4 p.m. at the center.

The ice cream is being donated by Friendly Ice Cream with enter- tainment provided by Strawberry Productions. There is no admission charge.

For further details about the ice cream social, contact the support center at extension 2273.

### Bank info

A representative from BayBank will be available March 19 from 9 a.m. to 12 noon at the Westover Desert Shield Support Center in Building 1310.

The representative will be available to provide information and answer any questions concerning a variety of banking matters.

Anyone interested in further information, please contact the center at ext. 2273.

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## Coming home ...

*(Continued from front page)*

homecoming celebrations earlier this week when small groups of returning desert troops landed at Westover. Nineteen soldiers arrived at the base Monday and 35 others landed here early Wednesday morning.

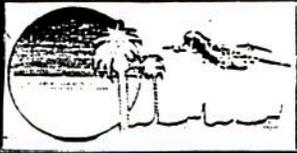
All were greeted with cheers, beers and a barbecue by flag-waving Westover personnel.

Brig. Gen. Mike Walker, 439th MAW commander, has promised

that "no one will return from the sand without a hero's welcome."

He made good on that pledge early Tuesday morning when he personally welcomed Army Specialist Arthana Wheeler as she landed at Westover.

Specialist Wheeler, a Hillsdale, N.Y. resident on emergency leave from her unit in Saudi Arabia, was the only passenger on a C-5 which arrived here at 3 a.m. General Walker and several other base officials joined members of the Wheeler family in a predawn welcome for the returning soldier.



# WESTOVER today

439th Military Airlift Wing

March 12, 1991

## Westover welcomes returning Desert Storm heroes

Heroes by the planeload have been arriving at Westover since Friday.

The first large units of returning Desert Storm troops landed at the base Friday and Saturday. Some were expected, and some weren't, but all received a rousing "hero's welcome" from throngs of well wishers at the base.

Shortly after 2 p.m. Friday, 104 members of the 2nd Battalion, 5th Special Forces Group landed at Westover aboard a C-141 aircraft enroute to Fort Campbell, Kentucky.

The Green Berets, who had been in the Persian Gulf for nearly seven months, were supposed to land at Loring AFB in Maine. They were diverted to Westover when a heavy snowstorm prevented them from landing at Loring.

The Special Forces soldiers--many of whom saw combat during the 100-hour ground war with Iraq--marched into the base hangar as a unit and were greeted with cheers and hugs by a crowd of 150 people.

"Awesome," said Maj. Kurt McNeely, executive officer with the 2nd Battalion. For these young guys, coming back and being welcomed like this, it lets them know the American people really appreciate the job they've done."

Two other contingents of 5th Special Forces Troops bound for Fort Campbell landed here Friday afternoon. All of the approximately 315 soldiers were treated to beers, soft drinks, and barbecued hamburgers and hot dogs during their stopover at the base.

The happy homecomings continued Friday night and Saturday morning when 16 C-130 aircraft carrying more than 400 members of the 40th Tactical Airlift Squadron from Pope AFB, N.C.

*(continued on next page)*



**WARM FAMILY WELCOME** -- Army Specialist Arthena Wheeler is greeted by her niece, Diane, in Westover's Base Hangar as she returned to the U.S. after duty in the Persian Gulf.

### *Our own come home*

Westover welcomed home some of "its own" over the weekend.

Two members of the 337th MAS--Capt. Christopher Donovan and MSgt. Virginia J. Zilinsky--returned to the base late Friday night after an extended deployment in the Persian Gulf. On Sunday afternoon, seven members of the 74th AES returned here from duty in Bahrain. Lt. Col. Mary Roche, Maj. Sylvia Johnson, 1st Lt. Pat Murphy, TSgt. Eugene Dumont, TSgt. Susan Pineault, TSgt. Edwin Moralez and Sgt. Wayne Allen were among 110 74th AES nurses and medical technicians who deployed overseas Feb. 5. According to Col. Joseph Curley, deputy commander for medical resources, other 74th members are expected to return to Westover during the coming week.

# Westover salutes veterans with march in tribute

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 Saturday.

A strong, steady wind gave added dignity to the dozens of flags which pulled at poles gripped by marchers. T

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 Marksmen Alumni Drum and Bugle Corps, 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."

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.

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

## Briefly...

### Busy Day

They won't be worn out, but Westover's welcome mat and red carpet are going to get a real workout today.

Sometime between 8 a.m. and 9 a.m., 30 members of Westover's 74th AES who have been stationed in Germany since early February will arrive at the base.

Between noon and 1 p.m. today, more than 200 members of the 10th Special Forces from Fort Devens, Mass. will return here from the Persian Gulf.

Throughout today and tomorrow, numerous other air craft carrying returning Desert Storm troops are expected to land at Westover.

### PWP Dance

The Springfield Hall of Fame Chapter 82 of Parents Without Part

ners will hold an open benefit dance March 22 at the Wyckoff Country Club on Route 141 in Holyoke at 8:30 p.m. All proceeds will go to Westover's Desert Shield Support Center.

The admission charge is \$5.00 for members and \$7.00 for nonmembers. For further information contact Larry Dansky at 584-3538 or Carlos Santos at 594-6403.

### Country concert

A country western concert for the benefit of Westover's Desert Shield Support Center will be held March 24 at 3 p.m. at the Moose Lodge on Fuller Road in Chicopee.

The concert, which will feature at least five country western bands, is being sponsored by the Moose Lodge and C.B. Express. All proceeds will be donated to the support center.

Active duty military personnel with green ID cards will be admitted free of charge. Admission for others is \$3. For further information, contact Paul Lipski at 527-7989.

## Double Duty NCOs

SSgt. Shirley Kenniston and TSgt. Dave Motowidlak don't stop thinking about Westover when their duty day ends.

Sergeants Kenniston, 59th APS member, and Motowidlak, 439th OMS member, decided to use their limited spare time to help the Desert Shield Support Center.

Along with MSgt. Ed Kolodjay of the 439th AMS, the NCOs spearheaded an effort to sell Desert Storm tee shirts to raise funds for the center.

The Westover sergeants approached Paul Bowler of Tee Shirts, Etc., Inc. of Glastonbury, Conn. who designed the shirts and assisted with marketing.

The collaborative effort paid off in a big way Saturday when Sergeants Kenniston and Motowidlak presented checks for \$2,850 to Karen Craig, coordinator of the Desert Shield Support Center. a ceremony at Westover.

Massachusetts State Senator Brian Lees of East Longmeadow, Mr. Bowler, and his wife Deborah, attended the ceremony.

## WESTOVER today

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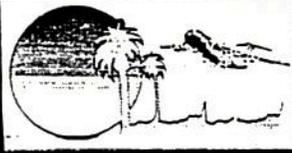
landed at the base.

The first C-130 landed shortly after 9 p.m. and the last touched around 5 a.m., but all of the arriving Air Force personnel were given enthusiastic welcomes by the base personnel, area veterans and local volunteers who waited throughout the night to greet them.

"This is wild and absolutely unimaginable. It's unbelievable,"

said A1C William Kenna, a member of the 40th TAS. His C-130 unit had been stationed in the desert since last August.

The welcomes are expected to continue at Westover for as long as returning Desert Storm troops land here. Brig. Gen. Mike Walker, 439th MAW commander, has promised that "no one will return from the sand without a hero's welcome."



# WESTOVER today

439th Military Airlift Wing

March 15, 1991

## As others return, Westover ALCE packs for Gulf deployment

While others are celebrating homecomings, the Westover ALCE team is packing its bags for deployment to the Middle East.

Nine members of the 439th Airlift Control Flight were activated this week to help organize the return of Desert Storm troops and cargo. They plan to be operating at a mobile command post in northern Saudi Arabia by the beginning of April.

Lt. Col. Robert McMillan will lead the team of operations officers and NCOs and loadmasters who will relieve active duty members. He will take command of about 200 ALCE members performing command and control of the airlift home. ALCE teams train to deploy to forward operating bases to set up a command post.

The Westover team will join others who have been working 12 hour shifts with few days off and living in a tent city. They expect to remain in Saudi Arabia until the bulk of the redeployment is completed.

The forward operating base where the Westover personnel will be stationed was very active and suffered the loss of aircraft during Desert Storm. It is now a central redeployment point for Allied ground forces and equipment aboard military and civilian aircraft.

Those on the Westover ALCE team are operations officers Major Wayne Petitto and Major 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.

As the recently activated ALCE reservists ready for their trip to the Persian Gulf, Westover continues its

*(continued on next page)*



**PROUD HOME-COMING --** SSgt. Angel Santana, a 74th AES medical technician, shows the colors from the top hatch of the C-130 which brought the 74th members home March 10. *(photo courtesy of Union-News)*

## *The feeling of freedom*

One of the songs played in the base hangar during homecoming ceremonies for the returning Desert Storm troops was composed and sung by a member of the 439th CES. SSgt. Francis L. Waldron, a 27-year old construction worker who is also an accomplished musician, wrote the song "Feeling of Freedom" as a tribute to armed service members whose duty separates them from their loved ones. He recently recorded the song at the Signature Sounds studio in Palmer, Mass. Sergeant Waldron's song has attracted the interest of area radio stations, and has been a big hit with the Gulf veterans and guests who have been celebrating in the Base Hangar.

# From Hartford to Chicopee: a journey of love

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 morning.

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 towards

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 Tuesday afternoon. "I had a beautiful day." A Westover worker who lives in Connecticut gave Mrs. Taylor a ride home Tuesday night.

By mid-morning Wednesday, she was back in the hangar, greeting the Persian Gulf veterans, and beaming when they autographed a newly purchased Desert Storm tee shirt.

"I took the bus again," she said with a smile.

## Briefly ...

### Free home show

Active duty personnel and their spouses will be admitted free to the Western Mass. Home Show, which is scheduled for March 19-24 at the Eastern States Exposition grounds in West Springfield. Sponsored by the Home Builders Association of Greater Springfield, the event is the biggest home show in New England. The show's promoters are also lending a hand to the Desert Shield Support Center's food pantry. Persons who donate a canned food item at the show will receive a \$1 discount on the general admission price. Volunteers from Westover are needed to staff the food collection sites at the show. For further details, call ext. 2273.

### Tax help

The April 15 tax deadline is fast approaching, but help is available at Westover. The base Legal Office in Building 1875 offers federal and state income tax forms and instructions. Your unit tax adviser can answer basic tax-related questions, and other assistance can be obtained from volunteers coordinated by the Desert Shield Support Center. For further information, contact SMSgt. Joseph Kusiak of the Legal Office staff at ext. 3180.

### Tee up

Active duty members of the armed forces and their dependents can now play golf for free at the Chicopee Country Club. The city's golf commission recently voted to waive

green's fees for Desert Storm personnel and their families. The free golf is available Monday through Friday. Tee times must be reserved in advance by calling the pro shop at 594-9295.

### Hockey tickets

Free Boston Garden hockey tickets for a Celebrity Gold Medal game Saturday night are available at the Westover USO office in the Base Gym.

One hundred tickets were donated by the organizers of the match between the 1980 U.S. Olympic hockey team and a celebrity all-star team. The game will be played at 7 p.m. Saturday and ticket holders will meet players after the match.

The USO office will be open until noon on Saturday. The tickers were donated on Wednesday night. For more information, call ext. 2522.

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## Hotline offers information

Information about Desert Storm homecoming flights landing at Westover is now available around the clock.

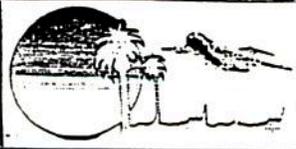
A 24-hour number--557-HOME--is staffed during the day and offers recorded information about arrival times after duty hours.-

### ALCE deploys..

*(continued from front page)*

around-the-clock welcomes for returning Desert Storm veterans.

Members of the 74th AES returned from overseas duty in Bahrain, Germany and Saudi Arabia over the past four days, and more than 2,200 returning Desert Storm veterans have passed through the Base Hangar since the cease-fire was signed.



# WESTOVER today

439th Military Airlift Wing

March 21, 1991

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

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.

Captain Smith, a navigator aboard AC-130 gunships with the 919th Special Operations Group from Duke Field, Fla., arrived here after spending the last 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 Sunday, 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 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



**REUNITED--**CMSgt. Bob Adams of the 42 APS (left) was reunited with Capt. J.D. Smith Sunday at Westover. Captain Smith, a former transportation officer with the 42nd MAPS, landed here on his way home from Desert Storm duty in Saudi Arabia with the 919th SOG of Duke Field, Fla.

unit members to constantly improvise. "We welded some scrap metal into weights and then we had a gym," he said.

But Sunday, the Air Force Academy graduate wasn't thinking much about the desert. He was simply glad to be

*(continued on next page)*

### ***With a little help from our friends***

The citizens of Massachusetts and Connecticut responded in a big way over the weekend during WWLP's telethon to raise money for Operation Patriot Home. Channel 22 broadcast a two-hour telethon live from the base hangar Friday night and collected more than

\$50,000 in pledges to the Westover USO. The donations will be used to continue the homecoming for the Desert Storm troops who have been landing here. Newsman Sy Becker of Channel 22 said Sunday that the phone lines were jammed during the broadcast, and that calls were still being received at the station over the weekend from donors wishing to make pledges.

# 99th Bomb Wing lives on in South Dakota

Remember the old 99th Bomb Wing which was stationed at Westover until 1974? It's alive and well and living in South Dakota under a slightly different name.

Capt. Ed O'Neal of the 99th Strategic Weapons Wing at Ellsworth AFB, near Rapid City, South

Dakota, is visiting Westover this week. His unit is the successor to the 99th BMW.

Captain O'Neal's purpose in visiting the base is to gather information about the history of the 99th BMW from 1956-1974. He's interested in meeting with former 99

BMW members, gathering historical data, and obtaining 99th memorabilia for display in the 99th SSW headquarters at Ellsworth.

He can be reached this week at Westover at ext. 2033. His number at Ellsworth is (605) 385-4273 or DSN 675-4273.

## Briefly...

### 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 needs 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 Connecti-

cut dentists and to possibly broaden treatment options through a discount system. Further information will be published when available.

### PWP Dance

The Springfield Hall of Fame Chapter 82 of Parent's Without Partners will hold an open benefit dance March 22 at the Wyckoff Country Club on Route 141 in Holyoke at 8:30 p.m. All proceeds will go to Westover's Desert Shield Support Center.

The admission charge is \$5.00 for members and anyone with a military ID, and \$7.00 for all others.

For further information, contact Larry Dansky at 584-3538 or Carlos Santos at 594-6403.

### Pints aplenty

Last week's blood drive at Westover was highly successful, according to Capt. Tom Schwechheimer of the MWR staff. The blood drive coordinator said that 115 pints of blood were collected March 11. He said the Red Cross will hold another blood drive at the base sometime next summer.

### USO Donations

Base officials have received many telephone calls recently from people wishing to donate to the homecoming celebrations. Checks should be made payable to Westover U.S.O., "Operation Patriot Home," and mailed to Westover USO, Box 58, Westover AFB, MA 01022.

## WESTOVER today

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### Reunion...

*(continued from front page)*

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 active duty and reserve service, stayed overnight in Chicopee. His unit left here for Duke Field shortly after 1 p.m. Monday.

He said that he's 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.



# WESTOVER today

439th Military Airlift Wing

March 26, 1991

## Westover's special welcome stuns most returning heroes

During the past two weeks, more than 10,000 Desert Storm troops have taken their first steps on American soil at Westover.

Many of them seem overwhelmed as they walk down the red carpet in the base hangar to the cheers of thousands of Westover personnel and area citizens.

All of them are grateful for the hero's welcome which Westover provides around the clock, seven days a week.

"This is something I never expected," said Lance Cpl. Peter Ramsey of the 7th Marine Division, Twenty Nine Palms, Calif. "This will stick out most in my memory of all the places I've been."

"It's like a dream," said Spec.4 Raymond Arnold of the HHC, 3160th Division at Hunter Army Airfield, Georgia. It brought tears to my eyes."

Air Force Capt. Jim Boothe, of the 833rd Medical Group at Holloman AFB, N.M., said that he was overwhelmed when he walked through the hangar door. "It's the most sensational feeling," he said. "To know that people care this much makes it all worth it. You people are really doing something special."

Another member of the 833rd Medical Group--A1C Darcy Hutchinson--said that the Westover welcome convinced her that her days in the desert were 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."

TSgt. Lynn "Moon" Mullins, a member of the 354th CES from Myrtle Beach AFB, S.C., said that he wasn't prepared for the type of homecoming he received here. "I didn't believe it. Somebody had said something about a beer wagon, but no one said anything about the people. I tried to walk (down the red carpet) as fast as I could so I



**HOMEWARD BOUND --** Marines from Camp Pendleton, Calif., get an affectionate send-off from well wishers as they prepare to board a plane home from Westover. (photo courtesy of the Union-News)

wouldn't get too choked up."

Thousands of area citizens have flocked to Westover since the troops started landing here. They greet the arriving troops with cheers, handshakes, hugs and autograph requests.

Although no one here is exactly sure how long the homecomings will continue, Westover officials have promised to conduct the welcome celebration for as long as troops continue to pass through the base.

## Sunday not a day of rest

Sunday wasn't a day of rest. In fact, according to Lt. Col. Robert Krischling, commander of the 42nd APS, it was one of the busiest days at Westover since the cease-fire. During a 24-hour period that ended at 8 a.m. Monday, the base handled 31 aircraft, 987 returning Desert Storm troops and more than 1000 tons of west-bound cargo. From August 4 through March 24, Westover processed nearly 32,000 men and women enroute to the Persian Gulf. During the past two weeks, 10,247 military personnel have landed to a hero's welcome at Westover as they returned from the war.

# Returning Army corporal tells of devastation in Kuwait

Army Corporal Joseph Gass liked Westover when he first saw it last December.

He liked the base even better when he landed here last week, after spending the past four months in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.

Corporal Gass is a communications specialist with the First Infantry Division at Fort Riley, Kansas. His unit passed through the base last fall enroute to Saudi Arabia.

"We were treated nicely here going over, but coming back to Westover was great," Corporal Gass said after being given a rousing "hero's welcome" when his unit returned here from the desert on the way back to Kansas.

Corporal Gass, a six-year Army veteran, saw combat during the 100-

hour ground war to liberate Kuwait. When the Iraqis retreated, he got a close-up view of the devastation which the enemy inflicted upon Kuwait.

"They destroyed the place," Corporal Gass said. "Buildings were destroyed, automobiles were ruined and microwaves towers were knocked down. It was like going through a junk yard."

Kuwaiti roads and highways were pockmarked with bomb craters, according to Corporal Gass.

Among the sights which the corporal will always remember were the Kuwaiti oil wells which Saddam Hussein's forces set ablaze before leaving. One wildly burning well was about 500 yards from the spot where Corporal Gass' unit was camped.

"It lit up the whole sky at night," he said. You could go outside at night and read a book.

The thick smoke from the oil well fires also posed major problems. "If the wind changed, the smoke could change day into night," the corporal said.

Once the Iraqi invaders were defeated, the Kuwaitis celebrated their liberation with gusto. "Many of them were firing weapons into the sky," Corporal Gass said. "They were really happy."

The 24-year-old Persian Gulf veteran said that he was anxious to get back home, and added that he was delighted with the Westover welcome.

"The reception we received here was really great," he said.

## Briefly ...

### Welcome notoriety

The "word" about the warm greeting Westover is giving to returning Desert Storm troops is apparently spreading like wild fire.

An article published in the Springfield Sunday Republican March 10 noted that "Earlier this week when 34 troops arrived from the desert, one was overheard muttering to another as they got off the

plane, 'look out for the white haired general with the leather jacket.'" Sunday, during welcoming ceremonies in the base hangar, a number of the Desert Storm troops asked Brig. Gen. Mike Walker, 439th MAW commander, to pose for snapshots with them. "I guess my name has reached the other side of the pond," General

### Discount rentals

If you want to take a quick trip to see relatives, or you just need to get away, Budget Rent-A-Car offers special rates to military members, active

or reserve, and their dependents. For more information on \$59-a-day one way fees, no drop-off charge, and other special benefits, call local 732-5191 or 1-800-433-4361.

### Job Searching?

The Desert Shield Support Center will be hosting a workshop, April 6, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., for those interested in honing job search skills.

If you are interested in attending, please call the Center at 557-CARE for reservations.

Lunch will be provided.

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## Chaplains schedule Holy Week services

The base Chaplain's Office has announced its schedule of Holy Week Services.

Catholic Mass will be celebrated each day this week through Wednesday at 12 noon in Building 1408. On Friday, a Catholic Good Friday service will be held at 3 p.m. in the Squadron Briefing Room of the Base Hangar. An ecumenical Tenebrae service will also be held Friday at 7 p.m. in the Squadron Briefing Room in the Base Hangar.

No religious services are scheduled on Saturday. On Sunday, Catholic Easter Mass will be celebrated at 9 a.m. in the Squadron Briefing Room at the Base Hangar. Protestant worship services will be celebrated at 10:30 a.m. in the same location.



# WESTOVER today

439th Military Airlift Wing

March 28, 1991

## More medics return, ALCE team prepares to head for sand

Operation Desert Storm will have Westover personnel literally coming and going over the next few days.

More members of the 74th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron, who have been serving in Saudi Arabia and Germany since Feb. 5, are expected to return to the base today and tomorrow.

According to Lt. Col. Richard Carr, commander of the 74th AES, 10 unit members who have been serving in the Gulf will land at Westover sometime today. Another contingent of 30 medics, who have been stationed in Germany, will return here between 7-9 p.m. Friday night.

All of the returning Westover personnel will receive the rousing "hero's welcome" which the base has afforded to more than 11,500 returning Desert Storm troops since March 9.

Shortly after the base greets its nurses and medical technicians, it will say goodbye to nine members of its 439th Airlift Control Flight.

The ALCE team, led by Lt. Col. Robert McMillan, will depart for the Persian Gulf aboard a C-141 aircraft Sunday at 2 a.m.

Team members will be stationed at an airbase in the desert where they'll help coordinate the massive airlift of Desert Storm troops and cargo returning to the United States. They expect to remain overseas until most of the redeployment is completed.

In addition to Colonel McMillan, ALCE team members who will deploy to the Gulf this weekend include Maj. Wayne Petitto, Maj. Thomas Mauzaka, MSgt. Fred Frani, MSgt. Bob Seaton, TSgt. Jim St. Cyr, SMSgt. Frank Ruotolo, MSgt. Tom O'Brien, and TSgt. Greg Morin.

"We want to get the troops back as fast as possible," Colonel McMillan  
*(continued on next page)*



**HERO'S WELCOME**-- Six-year-old Andrea Babbin of West Springfield has her T-Shirt autographed by Desert Storm Marine Robert Marshall as he waits in Westover's Base Hangar for a California-bound plane.  
*(photo courtesy of the Union-News)*

## *That's a lot of dough*

Since last August, Operation Desert Cookie has baked 83,458 cookies which were distributed to troops stationed in the Persian Gulf, as well as those now returning home through Westover. The highly successful operation was spearheaded by Joyce Stewart of 14 Carrots, an East Longmeadow catering business. According to Ms. Stewart, it took plenty of ingredients to prepare the massive mounds of cookies. She used 994 pounds of margarine, 4,684 eggs, 3,736 cups of flour, 2,768 cups of oatmeal, 3,358 cups of brown sugar, 517 pounds of raisins, 274 pounds of peanut butter, six gallons of vanilla extract, 894 pounds of chocolate chips, 620 pounds of walnuts, 411 pounds of pecans, 642 pounds of white sugar, 1,426 cups of almonds and 1,327 cups of Rice Krispies.

# Hospitality wagon cheers flightline workers

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."

The baked goods are donated by 35 civilian groups and individuals. "We have all kinds of people helping out," said Sergeant Boucher. "There are church groups who bake for us, and a group of teenagers donates six-dozen cookies every two weeks. We even have grandfather baking," she said.

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.

## Briefly ...

### Financial boost

The Westover Air Force Base chapter of the USO has received approximately \$59,000 in donations to support the base's ongoing effort to welcome home Desert Storm troops.

The USO, an independent service organization which aids military members, has been accepting the donations for the homecoming celebration which is known as "Operation Patriot Home."

According to Col. Joseph A. Curley, a Westover liaison with the USO, approximately \$42,000 of the amount collected has already been expended or obligated. Colonel Curley estimates that approximately \$5 is spent to greet each veteran.

### Meditation room

A new chapel meditation room is now available, resplendent with a new altar and lectern, new carpeting and magnificent stained glass windows. Stop by and see, or call the 439th CSG Chaplain's office at ext. 3031 for more information.

## Come and go...

*(continued from front page)*

said. "The war might be over but the redeployment is just beginning."

"Having been involved in sending them off to the war, it will be nice to now help them get back," he said. "The sooner we get them home, the sooner we can return," he added.

Colonel McMillan said that unit personnel would appreciate mail during their desert deployment. The address for ALCE members is 4410 OSW/439 ALCF/USAF, APO, N.Y. 09768.

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## After 10 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.

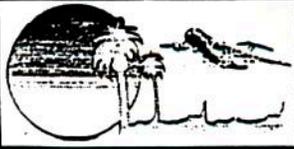
Marine SSgt. Donald Cobb of Camp Pendleton, Calif. and his sister Betty Voltz of Springfield shared hugs and tears when they came together for the first time Saturday evening. Assignments at duty stations from Beirut to Okinawa had kept the Marine combat veteran and his sister separated for a decade.

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.



# WESTOVER today

439th Military Airlift Wing

April 1, 1991

## Penpal finds needle in a haystack at Base Hangar

Nine-year-old Jason Schoolcraft found a needle in a haystack March 29 when he met Buddy Bowens in the Westover 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, Wash., dashed off a thank you note to Jason. The two became penpals, corresponding frequently 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 ser-



**HELLO -- Jason Schoolcraft (center) and his mother, Nancy, talk with Maj. Dave Doyle of the 337th MAS, Friday at Westover. Jason also met his Desert Storm penpal, MSgt. Buddy Bowens of McChord AFB, Wash.**

geant 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 the gifts which Jason sent him in the package reminded him of the items which his own children mailed to him. And he

said that he deeply appreciated receiving the frequent notes which he received from the boy.

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

### *Lights, camera, action...*

Westover went Hollywood on March 30. Westover's now famous welcome home celebrations for Desert Storm troops returning to America were filmed over the weekend by a crew from "Air Force Now." The "Air Force Now" films are shown to audiences around the globe at commanders calls and other events and are used to keep Air Force members informed about subjects of interest. Capt. Fred G. Dickenson and SMSgt. James J. Corcoran, both from the Hanscom AFB public affairs office, captured the happy homecomings on video tape and interviewed a number of returning troops and Westover personnel in the Base Hangar.

# Galaxy Council volunteers at homecoming celebration

Galaxy Community Council volunteers are thanking the public for "witnessing history at Westover AFB" by distributing gifts of Westover memorabilia at an exhibit in the Base Hangar.

Council members are offering gifts, including the booklet "Fifty Years of Flying," a children's coloring book featuring scenes from the history of Westover, C-5A stickers, and postcards, to the thousands of supporters applauding the returning troops.

In addition to the gifts, the booth functions as an information center for parents of returning troops and prospective volunteers to aid other booths, and council

members answer many questions about the base.

"The exhibit is one way for the Galaxy Council to thank people for witnessing history at Westover, and an opportunity to give back something to the people who have given so much to us," said council president Jeff Spear. The Galaxy Community Council is made up of about 100 community supporters of Westover AFB.

Council volunteers are also offering Westover AFB and C-5A posters in exchange for donations and are selling the video "Fifty Years at Westover" and the book, "Westover: Man, Base and Mission."

## Briefly ...

### Family affair

When Sgt. Michael Curley, a medical technician with the 74th AES, returned from war Friday night, he didn't salute his commanding officer, he gave the colonel a giant hug.

Col. Joseph Curley, deputy commander of medical resources, and over 2,000 well-wishers, greeted his son Michael, and nine other members of the 74th after they returned from 10 weeks of Desert Storm duty near Ramstein AB, Germany.

"I was thrilled to be part of the operation," said Sergeant Curley. "It was fortunate that I was never needed."

Although the sergeant would

have liked to have seen some action, he said that it worked out better that he didn't because that meant there were few casualties.

"He was like a fireman," said Colonel Curley. "You're glad to pay him for waiting to do his job, and you hope he's not needed."

After a two-day furlough, the younger Curley will report back for duty to his father again.

### Easter activity

Westover was a busy place Easter Sunday.

During the 24-hour period which ended at 8 a.m. Monday, Westover handled 12 aircraft arrivals and nine departures. The base also greeted 341 returning Desert Storm troops.

Thus far, 12,230 service members have received a "hero's welcome" here as they returned from the Persian Gulf.

### 639th deactivated

Westover's 639th Security Police Flight, called up to support Operation Desert Storm in January, will be released from active duty April 5. The flight is the first 439th Military Airlift Wing unit to be demobilized since the first Westover reservists were called up in August.

The 43-member force was activated January 24, 1991 and served at Westover. MSgt. Timothy Murphy, first sergeant, said that the decreased threat-con level resulted in the decision to deactivate the unit.

Members of the Department of Defense police department, and activated 439th Security Police Squadron personnel will continue to provide security and at Westover.

Approximately 1500 members of the 439th MAW remain on active-duty status here.

## WESTOVER today

This publication is edited, prepared and provided by the Public Affairs office of the 439th Military Airlift Wing. Call us with comments or story ideas at ext. 2072. Contents of **WESTOVER today** are not necessarily the official views of or endorsed by the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense or the Department of the Air Force. **WESTOVER today** will be published twice weekly.

## Wing looks towards demobilization

Brig. Gen. Mike Walker, 439th Military Airlift Wing commander, hopes to have his troops home for the Fourth of July.

"It is not possible now to definitely say when demobilization (of the Wing) will take place, but I am hopeful that it will occur prior to the President's announced 'troops will be home date of July 4th'," General Walker said last week.

"While the conflict in the Mid-

dle East has fallen from the front pages...our task has not been completed," the wing commander added. "You can be sure that you will not be kept on active duty a day longer than required to get the job done."

General Walker also said that a "Homecoming for Westover Heroes", to honor the women and men of the 439th MAW, is being planned. It is possible that the celebration will be held sometime in June, he said.