

PATRIOT

439TH AIRLIFT WING • AIR FORCE RESERVE • WESTOVER AFB

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FEBRUARY 1994

Westover helps get FEMA team to quake area

by MSgt. Thomas Allocco

Training and contingency planning paid off for Westover aerial porters in January when Federal Emergency Management Agency officials needed to move a Massachusetts-based team to earthquake shattered California on short notice.

Westover's Northeast Air Station helped coordinate the transport of the communications unit to California within 24 hours after the FEMA team was alerted for service. The loading operation had previously been rehearsed between aerial porters and the federal unit during periodic training exercise at Westover.

The 13-member FEMA team drove its four vehicles here from Maynard, Mass. and was loaded aboard a Travis AFB C-5. The 60th AW aircraft came here from Dover AFB, Del. following a mission to Somalia. After re-fueling and maintenance checks, the Galaxy flew the communications specialists to March AFB, southeast of Los Angeles.

A. J. Johnson, leader of the FEMA team said he was alerted 24- hours before the mission took place.

"I was called yesterday (Jan. 21) and told we were needed in California as soon as possible. Of course we had been waiting to get the call since the earthquake struck southern California on Monday (Jan. 17)."

Designated as a Mobile Emergency Response Support unit, the FEMA communications team brought a mobile radio van that weighed 46,000 pounds and three support vehicles to Westover. The unit was scheduled to set up in the Los Angeles area for an indefinite period of time to provide auxiliary telephone service for emergency response officials.

The New England-based FEMA specialists train periodically with Westover

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PLENTY OF ROOM -- Westover aerial port personnel assist loadmasters from the 60th AW from Travis AFB, Calif. load a FEMA vehicle onto a C-5. A FEMA team from New England left the base in January headed for earthquake-torn southern California.

SSgt. Nancy Robbins

\$1.9 million shoppette opens for business

by SSgt. Nancy Robbins

Westover's new \$1.9 million shoppette officially opened its doors on Jan. 18, showcasing over 8,400 square feet of shopping space, and giving customers more variety and value for their money, according to Javier Bustamante, AAFES general manager.

The new building, which was financed by profits made through the Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) fund, is located on the corner of Walker Avenue and Airlift Drive.

Bustamante said that besides having more retail space, the new shoppette also boasts three self-serve gas pumps which are scheduled to be open at a Grand Opening Feb. 4.

"The price of the fuel will definitely be less than what you can get outside the gate," he said.

Bustamante said they will carry mostly the same merchandise as the old facility, but can now offer a larger selection and variety as well.

"We've got bigger and better refrigeration facilities, five new checkout registers, and much more shelf space," he said.

The Class-Six store is located in the new facility as well, with a larger assortment of potables, Bustamante added.



SSgt. Nancy Robbins

FIRST CUSTOMER -- Ronnie Thigpen, an Army reservist assigned to the 76th Training Division, checks out at Westover's new shoppette. Thigpen was the first customer to use the \$1.9 million facility.

The store hours remain the same, Sunday through Thursday 9 a.m. - 5 p.m., and Friday and Saturday 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.

According to Bustamante, the Army,

Air Force Exchange Service contributed more than \$142,000 of its profits to the Westover MWR fund during 1992 and the 1993 figure should be even greater.

Army's popular Golden Knights returning to Westover

by MSgt. Gordon A. Newell

The U.S. Army's famed parachute team, the Golden Knights, will share star billing with Canada's Snowbirds during Westover's Open House Aug. 27 and 28.

"The Golden Knights will officially open the show on Saturday, jumping from 12,500 feet," said Lt. Col. Forest Price, coordinator for the Open House.

"The Knights have performed here during our last four shows and are always a popular attraction," he said.

There is also a possibility that parachute teams from Great Britain and Canada will be performing this year.

"We have extended invitations to both the English and Canadian jump teams," said Price. "We are keeping our fingers crossed that they will be here."

The black and gold clad Knights offer a dramatic exhibition of precision teamwork from the time their aircraft inches across the sky and the narrator exclaims "jumper away."

As they freefall, reaching speeds of 150 miles per hour,

red smoke billows from canisters attached to each jumper's boot.

During the freefall, jumpers meet in formations. Relying on teamwork and confidence produced by countless hours of training, they perform such maneuvers as the baton pass, cutaway, diamond track and diamond formation.

At 2,000 feet, the jumpers deploy their black and gold chutes and float through the sky before landing within feet of a large orange target on the ground.

As the Army's goodwill ambassadors, the Golden Knights have performed their breathtaking drills in all 50 states and 40 foreign countries before millions of people.

According to Price, Westover's open house will be free to the public. Gates will open each day at 9 a.m. and close at 5 p.m.

Updated information will be available in the *Patriot* each month until the Open House.

Local hospital and base team up to help

Chemical malady may affect Desert Storm veterans

by SSgt. Peter Hyde

When TSgt. Jeffrey Sherwin came home from the Persian Gulf War in May, 1991, he was pretty sure he'd be able to shake the head cold he brought home and get back to a normal lifestyle.

He didn't.

Three years after the end of the Gulf War, Sherwin is still struggling against an enemy that never flew a flag on the battlefield, but left him with wounds he'll suffer for the rest of his life.

Though he didn't know it at the time, the 44-year-old radio operator who serves with Westover's 74th Aeromedical Evacuation Group, was exhibiting the signs of a recently discovered disorder called Multiple Chemical Sensitivity Syndrome, or MCSS for short.

The sometimes painful affliction has symptoms, which range from skin disorders to respiratory problems and is believed to stem in part from Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's disastrous "scorched earth" policy in Kuwait.

"When the Iraqis began to pull out of Kuwait in late February and early March, they set fire to the oil well heads in Kuwait," Sherwin said. "We were 40 miles south of Kuwait and the skies were overcast with the fumes. You could feel it on your skin. But we were so worried about keeping our equipment clean that we didn't think about what we were getting on ourselves. One day in late March, I woke up with what I thought was a head cold. But it's awful hard to find cold medicine in Saudi Arabia. When I came home, I thought I could shake it. Now it's an ongoing thing and it doesn't seem to be getting any better."

In recent months, researchers have begun a landmark effort to better understand the nature of the disorder and what can be done for those who are suffering from it. Dr. Mary Shavitz, who serves on the staff at the Veterans Administration Hospital in Northampton, has pioneered a treatment program that helps victims of the disorder to cope.

Shavitz believes that the human body has a certain tolerance level for chemical exposure, beyond which tissue and nerve damage can result. She adds that stress is a complicating factor, and can impair the immune system's ability to ward off harmful effects of a chemical substance.

While Sherwin attributes his sickness to the fumes produced by the burning Kuwaiti oil wells, Shavitz believes that the syndrome was also caused by kerosene lamps and heaters Gulf

War troops used to stay warm in their tents.

After receiving a Bronze Star for his service in the Vietnam War, Sherwin said he was frustrated that a temporary tour could do so much damage so unexpectedly.

"I find it ironic that after serving for two years as an infantryman with the 101st Airborne in a tough fight in Vietnam, I came home in better shape than I did after three months in the Persian Gulf where the fight wasn't nearly as tough," Sherwin said.

Capt. Rosemary Costa, a nurse with the 74th AEG, watched

the war from the front lines on the Saudi Arabian/Kuwaiti border and observed firsthand the effects of battlefield stress, difficult living conditions and the burning wells.

"Any unit that was over there was exposed," Costa said. "By 2 o'clock in the afternoon, the sun was completely gone (because of the fumes). We also had a problem with a lack of water up at the front, so if you were exposed to the fumes, you just didn't get the residue off your body."

Expressing a deep-seated concern for the welfare of the exposed troops, Costa has closely monitored existing research and regularly advises those suffering from MCSS to consider Shavitz's treatment program.

"I am concerned about my own exposure," Costa said. "But I'm more concerned for people like Jeff (Sherwin). I want to get the word out to Marines and everyone that served there that treatment is available."

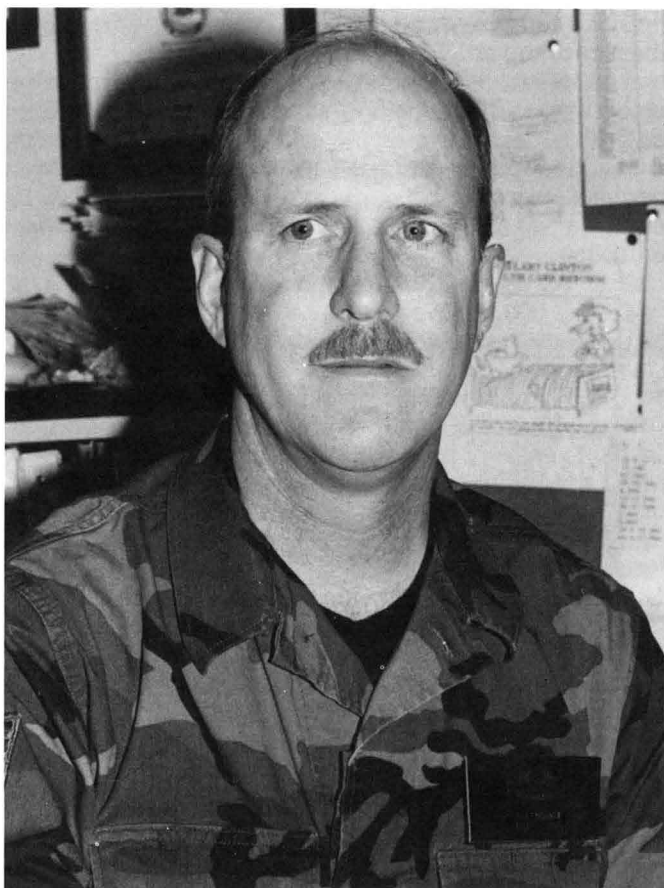
So far, 13,000 Gulf War veterans have been screened by the VA, but there is disagreement over what kinds of benefits should be paid out and to whom.

What's more, the National Academy of Sciences is calling for research to be spread out over a period of years.

Col. James P. Czekanski, commander of the 439th MAW, expressed concern over the findings of the MCSS research and vowed his support for those who are suffering from the syndrome.

"I am very concerned that any member of the 439th, past or present, may have contact this disorder while serving in the Gulf area. I ask anyone who feels he or she is suffering from this syndrome to contact our clinic as soon as possible," Czekanski said.

In the meantime, Sherwin is resigned to the fact that his life has changed for good. "I think my wife and I are thankful that we completed our family before I went to the gulf," he said. "If we hadn't, I think I would have spent the rest of my life wondering what I'd passed on."



TSgt. Jeffrey Sherwin

Occupational badges authorized for all by October

by Capt. Paul P. Koscak Jr.

No matter what your job, there's now an occupational badge to wear with pride--but not until October, when the new emblems become available.

"Either everyone has them or no one has them," said MSgt. Karen Plichta, superintendent of the Air Force uniforms division at the Pentagon. That's also the sentiment of Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Merrill A. McPeak, who a year ago ordered a review of all specialty badges, Plichta said.

As a result, there are sure to be smiles from airmen who never sported specialty badges--about one third of all Air Force occupations--and frowns from others who will lose their familiar shields as distinct occupations become grouped under more general career fields.

Still, the reshuffling resulted in unique badges for civil engineering, public affairs, historian, intelligence, meteorologist and paralegal.

Other career fields lost their distinction.

For instance, the missile badge will be eliminated and merged with the Space Command badge. Badges for air weapons and air traffic controllers--professions that use radar to direct aircraft--will be replaced by a broader Command and Control badge.

Under the new system, all Air Force badges will be "functionally grouped" into three classes--aeronautical, occupational and duty, Plichta said.

Although everyone will have an occupational badge, wearing them will be optional except for chaplains and aircrew members.

The review also changed the way badges are earned and upgraded.

Badges will be awarded only upon graduation from an initial training school. Enlisted airmen will receive a star after completing seven-level training; a wreath after finishing the NCO Academy. Officers earn a star after seven years experience in their field; a wreath after 15 years.

Only one occupational badge will be allowed on the uniform.

New occupational badge examples



Historian



Human Resource Management



Information Management



Intelligence

Honor guard and drill team looking for new volunteers

by SSgt. Nancy Robbins

If you'd like to take part in some of the Air Force's oldest and proudest traditions--take note--the Westover honor guard and drill team may be looking for you.

SSgt. Luisa Cabana, a seven-year veteran of the honor guard, says the mission of both of these prestigious units is to perform time-honored traditions for both military and civilian functions.

But if you are considering joining, Cabana warns, you must be prepared to devote lots of time and energy to the teams. She also stressed that joining is strictly voluntary.

"People sometimes don't realize the amount of time spent practicing and organizing the teams - it really takes a

dedicated person to be able to balance both their reserve duties, and the demands of the teams," Cabana added.

The Westover honor guard was started in 1983, and has been seen at dozens of events, both on and off base.

"When the public sees the honor guard, or drill team, in their eyes they are looking at the entire Air Force - so we really need some sharp, put-together troops to represent not only Westover and the reserve, but the Air Force as well," Cabana said.

She added that both the honor guard and drill team are looking to draw enlisted personnel from all units assigned to Westover.

The honor guard trains for formal military ceremonies such as parades, funerals, flag-bearing rites, while the drill

team performs precision, close-order drill using M-1 rifles. The drill team is a demonstration unit that performs at various functions.

The drill team, which came to life in 1989, has a height requirement because members carry M-1 rifles with fixed bayonets. However, the honor guard has no such height requirement.

Any reservist wishing to join, must meet Air Force Regulations 35-10 and 35-11.

As the units step up recruiting for what promises to be a busy year, they will hold an open house on both the A and B UTAs in February, starting at 1000 hours in the honor guard office located in Hangar Nine.

Further information is available from 1st Lt. Craig Peters, OIC at ext. 3373.

Unsung Patriot: Co-workers lavish praise on Labrecque

Article and photo
by SSgt. Christine Mora

As Lt. Col. Wayne Booker sees it, every commander has one or two key people who form the solid foundation of a unit.

If that's the case, the 439th Civil Engineering Squadron is built upon a Rock. As in MSgt. Richard "Rock" Labrecque.

"Rock is like a Boy Scout," said CES Commander Booker. "He's one of the most positive, reliable, honest guys in the whole unit. Every commander would love to have a hundred guys like Rock Labrecque."

This is the kind of praise that appears to make the plumbing supervisor humbly cringe. "I don't think I'm special," he said. "I'm just grateful to be part of a group of such phenomenal people."

"The CES is such a family-oriented unit," Labrecque explained. "Everyone watches out for each other and really cares. That has given me a lot of self-esteem and allowed me to really express myself."

After 16 years with the unit, the sergeant has had many opportunities to do so and in a variety of areas.

"Rock is one of those guys who just makes things go," said Booker. "You can ask him to do anything and he'll get it done -- no arguments."

Labrecque often goes beyond what's

asked of him, according to his commander. One example of his dedication was his response to a challenge many units face: lack of realistic training.

"When our unit reorganized, many of my new troops had little plumbing experience," Labrecque said. "We needed something practical, mobile and able to provide a cross-section of plumbing training."

The engineer took matters into his own hands -- literally. He designed a mobile, multi-purpose training apparatus that would provide hands-on training in all aspects of plumbing.

The wooden contraption allows reservists to practice "both rough plumbing and fixtures," according to Labrecque. "It was made to be disassembled and assembled in minutes, so it can be palletized and transported during annual tours or other events."

Labrecque acquired all the materials for the project -- costing over \$1,000 -- himself and didn't ask for help from the Air Force. "I didn't develop the project for kudos or recognition," he said.

He credits his brother for helping with the project. "David helped to tweak up the design and find materials and hardware," Labrecque said. "He also donated a lot of his personal time to help me build the training aid."

The experience of others is another

asset he depends on to train his people, said the supervisor. "We have limited time to train and many people don't perform their reserve job in the civilian world," he said. "Take me for example. I'm not a plumber, but I do want to learn."

Because the CES is a mobility unit, many members have additional duties and Labrecque's forte is rapid runway repair. When readiness manager SMSgt. Randy Malek received a request from AFRES for Staff Assistance inspectors, Labrecque was first on his list. "They asked me for a RRR pro, and that's Rock to a T," Malek said. "They were very impressed with his knowledge and hope to use him again."

Malek said that what makes Labrecque unique is his overabundance of enthusiasm and dedication. "As good a unit as we are, if everyone had the determination Rock does, we'd be the best in the world."

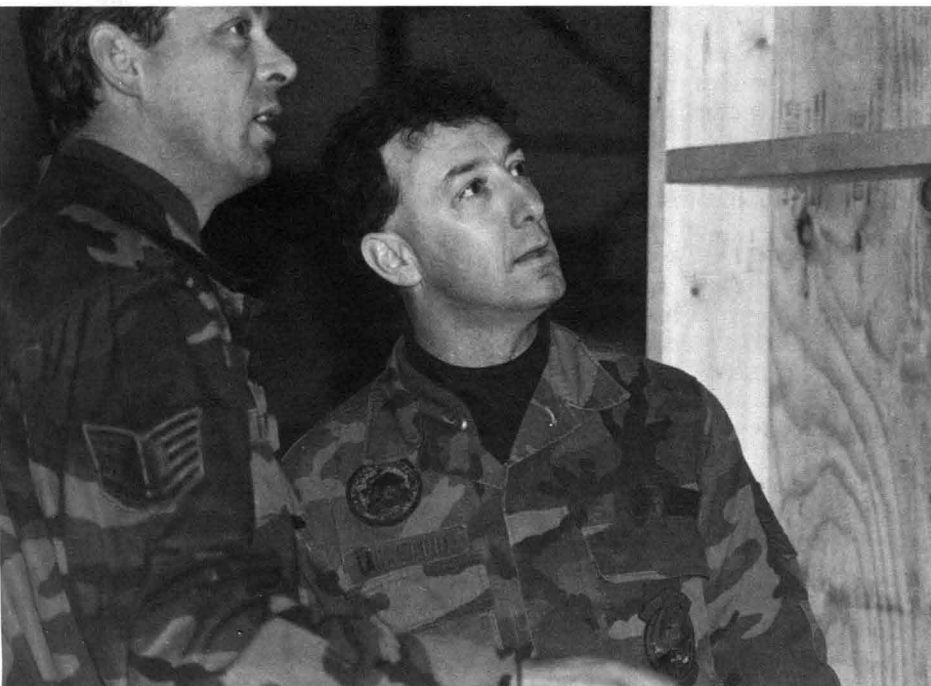
One of Labrecque's former supervisors, SMSgt. John Indomenico, CES structural superintendent, agreed. "Rock has more vim and vigor than 10 individuals put together," he said. "He developed various training programs and scenarios, combined that with his natural enthusiasm, and turned his shop into a team."

Labrecque credits several individuals as inspirations along his reserve path. "Retired SMSgt. Bill Roberts was someone who always pushed people to do their best," he said.

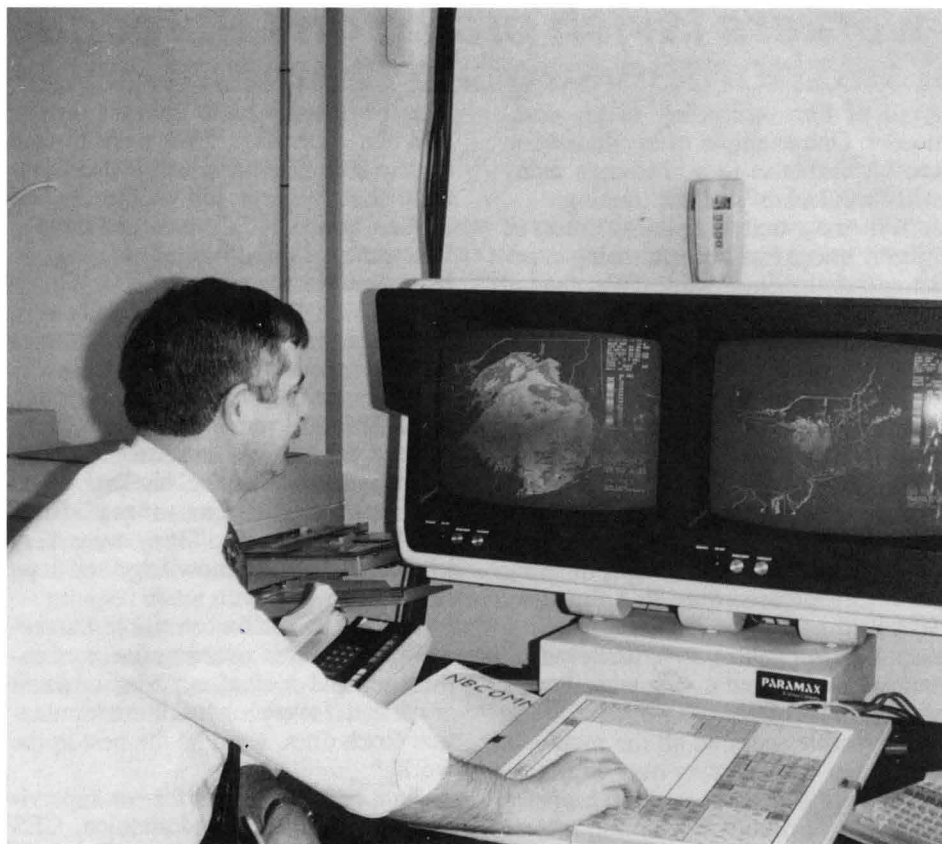
As for the accolades his co-workers shower on him, Labrecque said, "I don't feel like I'm better than anyone else. We all have the same goal-- to make our unit the best it can be and to keep Westover alive."

Labrecque, a machine operator in civilian life, resides in Beverly, Mass., with his wife, Donna, and daughters, Emily Ann, 18 and Melissa Lynn, 17. His enthusiasm for the military has rubbed off on Emily, a recent enlistee into the Army Reserve stationed at Fort Devens. "I'm not a letter-writer, but when Emily was in Basic Training, I wrote often and tried to help her deal with the stress and understand her drill sergeant's point of view," he said. "She shared the letters with her platoon and said they often helped everyone get through rough times."

Labrecque's enthusiasm and encouragement is apparently not limited to Westover's boundaries.



TRAINING AID -- MSgt. "Rock" Labrecque, right, and TSgt. Raymond Fleury, inspect a training aid Labrecque built to teach plumbing skills to 439th CES members.



DOPPLER DUTY – Bob Schwaber checks the new Doppler radar system which has been installed at the base weather station. The new equipment allows for faster prediction of weather.

Doppler radar enhances weather prediction

by SSgt. Christine Mora

Westover weathermen Kurt Osgood and Bob Schwaber predicted January's icy Siberian cold front a lot quicker thanks to the new state of the art radar system installed here last fall.

Doppler radar, which has become a new media buzz word, came on line in November. The computerized, full-color system allows forecasters to measure wind velocity, enhancing their ability to predict tornadoes, thunderstorms, cold fronts and hail.

"Since we got the system, we've been able to forecast cold fronts more rapidly," assistant weather chief Schwaber said. "It will be great in the spring and summer when we will be able to pick up thunderstorms earlier. The new system will show better movement, telling us if the storm will or won't hit our area."

Before the arrival of the new radar, the weathermen used the Kavorisy system, which only monitored clouds and precipitation. Doppler radar measures all three. The system follows wind velocity by measuring the movement of particles

in the air.

Doppler radar was developed in 1988 and has gained widespread use around the country. "The idea is to set up a network of geographical areas that overlap," said Schwaber. "Right now we have a dedicated line to Albany, but we can call other areas to input data from their territory."

Both Osgood, and Schwaber, who comprise the two-man weather office, attended a three-week school in Oklahoma to learn the new system. "It was an intense curriculum that combined knowledge of the atmosphere with interpretation of computer screens," Schwaber said. "While training in Oklahoma, we picked up several tornadoes on the screen. Prediction of tornadoes has been the greatest benefit to areas in the Midwest."

Both weathermen also serve together as military forecasters with the Air National Guard at Barnes ANG. "It's an interesting situation," chuckled Schwaber. "At Westover, Kurt (Osgood) is my civilian boss. At Barnes, I am his military supervisor."

Black History Month

African-Americans continue to play large military role

by Master Sgt. Linda Lee, USA (AFIS)

Recent DoD personnel figures show the percentage of African-Americans in the military is higher than the percentage in the overall U.S. population.

DoD personnel officials said about 20 percent of the military force is African-American. This compares to the latest Census Bureau figures, which show about 31 million blacks in the United States, or about 12.4 percent of the population.

Army figures show 157,046 people, or 27.6 percent of the overall force, are African-American.

The numbers break down to 8,353 officers, 1,390 warrant officers, 10.6 percent; and 147,303 enlisted, 30.7 percent.

In the Navy, 16.1 percent are black. DoD figures indicate of the 81,262 blacks in the Navy, there are 2,860 officers, 4.5 percent of the total number of officers; 270 warrant officers, 9.7 percent; and 78,132 enlisted members, 17.8 percent.

A total of 16.6 percent of the marine Corps or 29,701 people, are African-American. Of these, there are 764 officers, 4.6 percent of the officers; 208 warrant officers, 10.8 percent; and 28,729 enlisted members, 17.9 percent.

The total number of black officers in the Air Force is 4,738 or 5.6 percent of the officer corps, while there are 59,900 black enlisted members. This equals 16.8 percent of the enlisted corps. Overall, blacks account for 14.7 percent of the Air Force.

African-American women play a major role in DoD, said personnel officials. In the Army there are 31,001 black women, 43.8 percent of the 70,797 women in uniform; Navy, 13,148 black women, 24.3 percent of 54,190; Marine Corps, 2,012 black women, 24.6 percent of 7,864; and Air Force, 14,103 black women, 21.3 percent of 66,192.



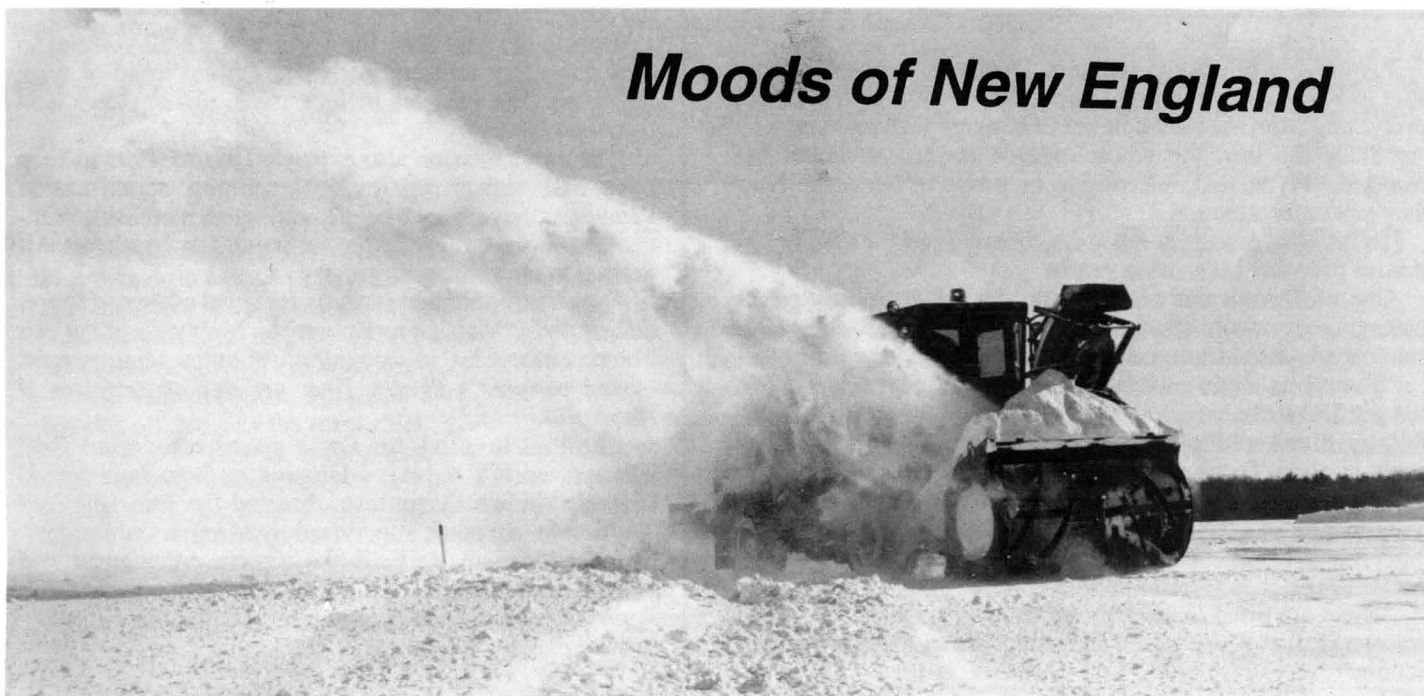


ENOUGH ALREADY! – These scenes were typical around Westover Air Reserve Base during the month of January, 1994. Curt Osgood, chief of the base's weather station reported that 26 inches of snow fell during the month and 36 inches have fallen since winter began. Normal snowfall for the entire season is 48 inches he said. If that weren't enough, daily temperatures averaged eight degrees below normal for the month and three records were set. The mercury fell to minus nine on Jan. 9; and minus 20 on Jan. 21 and 27. Despite the adverse conditions, the airfield remained open for business as usual.

Photos by TSgt. Sandi Michon



Moods of New England



34th APSS officer grabs AFRES honor

by Capt. Paul P. Koscak Jr.

Lt. Col. Terry Flynn's career got a finishing kick. Just six months shy of 20 years, the 34th Aeromedical Patient Staging Squadron medical readiness officer is the AFRES Outstanding Medical Readiness Officer of the Year. It's a home run, slam-dunk, hole-in-one.

She doesn't see it that way.

"I thought it was a joke," Flynn said incredulously.

Some joke.

Even at the apex of her reserve career, the Long Island resident brims with job enthusiasm.

No Weekend Warrior, Flynn's commitment to her unit's training and growth goes well beyond the UTA. Weekday mornings before leaving to work at North Shore University Hospital, where Flynn is an operating room nurse, the 45-year-old mother of three usually spends a few hours on the telephone.

It's reserve business. She stays in touch with her unit at nearby Roslyn Air National Guard Station, contacts Air Force officials at Norton Air Force Base, Calif., where she serves on a medical training task force or is shepherding plans for the next big medical exercise at Westover--all gratis.

The 34th APSS is located at Roslyn Air National Guard Base, about 30 miles east of New York City, and operates under the direction of the 439th Air Wing.

"Since the war, the whole attitude towards readiness has changed," Flynn said. "Now they pay more attention."

Flynn's big priority is training. Thanks to her three-month stint in Saudi Arabia during Desert Storm, she's able to infuse everything from obstacle courses to bunkers with realism.

"Since the war, the whole attitude toward readiness has changed," Flynn said, referring to members of her unit. "Now they pay more attention."

To keep her troops in top form, Flynn directs a training-intensive four-day UTA twice yearly.

One of Flynn's current projects is writing procedures for managing an aeromedical staging facility, holding areas for patients who need transportation to a major medical facility.

"There's no Bible on how to run an ASF," Flynn said. Well, not yet. But if she writes it, it may be one of the few books she follows. Flynn credits many of her accomplishments to keeping goals in sharp focus and a stubborn streak of Machiavellian independence.

"I'm a bit of a rebel and radical," she said.

Perhaps, but Flynn's dedication to the reserve seems to be constant. Her kids seem to know.

"There are times when they try to hang up the phone when someone calls," Flynn said. "They think it's an Air Force person calling."



Lt. Col. Terry Flynn

Transportation best in 22nd AF

By MSgt. Tom Allocco

Base Transportation workers, who gained new vehicles and expanded duties in 1993, have been named the best in the 22nd Air Force.

The approximately 75 military and civilian Base Transportation members who were recognized for their outstanding performance during 1993, will now compete for the Air Force Reserve top annual award.

During the past year, the section added 50 vehicles to their inventory as other Air Force bases closed or were realigned. The vehicles include truck, autos, plows, and front end loaders.

The unit's mission also expanded during 1993 to keep pace with the rising level of training operations at Westover. Drivers have been shuttling an increasing number of transient crews who are using the Northeast Air Station to do training drops.

Base Transportation recently received a letter of appreciation from Maj. Gen. Robert A. McIntosh, 22nd Air Force commander, in recognition of outstanding support of last summer's Patriot Tiger aerial port exercises at Dogpatch.

The best in 22nd Air Force award recognized Base Transportation's Vehicle Maintenance branch under Al Fimbel; Vehicle Operations, directed by Tom Hill; and Traffic Management, supervised by Marilyn Caldwell.

Capt. William Barry is the reserve commander and CMSgt. John Basile is NCOIC of the reserve branch which is part of the Logistics Support Squadron.

Martin replaces Kirschling as 42nd APS commander

by MSgt. Tom Allocco

Maj. Glenn Martin, an aerial port operations officer since 1987, succeeded Col. Robert Kirschling as commander of the 42nd Aerial Port Squadron this month.

As operations officer of the 58th APS, Martin was recognized as 1993 Officer of the Year by squadron members. He previously served as operations officer of the now deactivated 59th APS. Martin takes command of the squadron during a time of transition for aerial porters. The authorized strength of the 42nd and 58th has doubled to 228 members each as the squadrons have absorbed the aerial porters of the 59th APS.

"We're still recruiting new members as the aerial port mission grows," Martin said.

The 42nd APS has been tasked to provide aircraft services, serving all aircraft transiting Westover.

"Aircraft services is a demanding mission with high visibility in Westover's role as the Northeast Air Station. It will be a challenge for me to maintain the standards we've established and to continue to improve aircraft services," Martin said.

"This is a dynamic time in the aerial port business. It's an interesting time. One of the things we're looking at is a proposed aerial port terminal," he said.

"We are also reviewing plans to relocate the 42nd and 58th Aerial Port Squadrons in Hangar 3. Right now both squadrons are strapped for space. We could share a briefing room, classrooms and other work space," Martin said.

The 42nd currently serves on "B"



Maj. Glenn Martin

UTAs in Hangar 3 and the 58th works out of Hangar 9 on "A" weekends.

"I look forward to the challenge of this command and I am confident that the people of the 42nd take pride in their past accomplishments and look to the future with enthusiasm," Martin said.

Martin earned his commission in the AFROTC program at Norwich University in 1973. He served almost four years on active duty as executive support officer of a security police squadron at

Davis-Monthan AFB, Tucson, Ariz.

In 1978 he came to Westover as the executive support officer to the wing commander.

During Desert Shield/Storm, Martin served for nine months in the Command Post as the transportation liaison officer and as mission coordinator on the flight line.

Martin is a mortgage broker and resides in Ashburnham, Mass. where he is a member of the town planning board.

SSgt. Vin Blanchard

A contingent of the 58th Aerial Port Squadron served 15 days at Aviano Air Base, Italy in support of the humanitarian and security efforts in Bosnia-Herzegovina in December.

Maj. Glenn Martin, squadron operations officer, was the team chief of the 15 aerial porters who returned from Italy in mid-December. MSgt. Clarence Lomax was assistant team chief.

The aerial porters worked day and night shifts in the air freight and passenger terminals of the Italian Air

58th aerial porters serve at Aviano

Force base. Aviano is the center of U.S. and European air operations over Bosnia-Herzegovina, including Deny Flight fighter cover and surveillance.

Among the units they assisted was the 7th Air Combat Control Squadron from Keesler AFB, Miss. which is flying EC-130 surveillance over Bosnia-Herzegovina.

During their off-duty time the Westover aerial porters were passengers aboard an Army Chinook helicopter which ferried elite Italian Alpine moun-

tain troops in a joint exercise.

Due to a housing shortage caused by the high level of operations at Aviano, the aerial porters were housed in a ski lodge in the mountain village of Piancavallo, about 15 miles from the base.

The 58th APS contingent earned a certificate of appreciation and plaque in recognition of outstanding performance from the American detachment at Aviano.

by MSgt. Tom Allocco

Patriot People

Name: Paul H. Gilman
Rank: MSgt.
Age: 55
Address: Granby, Mass.
Unit: 439th MWRS
Position: Training NCOIC
Civilian position: Housing manager
Favorite food: Seafood
Years of service: 28
Favorite sport: Bowling
Favorite hobby: Baseball cards
Ideal vacation: Las Vegas
Best way to relax: Music
Preferred entertainment: Stage shows
Favorite celebrity: Bob Hope
Favorite music: Easy listening
Favorite book: *Readers Digest*
Favorite color: Blue
Favorite car: "Chev"
Pet peeve: Lack of money
Best thing about Westover: People
Worst thing about Westover: None



SSgt. Vin Blanchard

MSgt. Paul H. Gilman

Patriot Praises

Promotions

CMSgt. DeGray, Stuart E.
 CMSgt. Milroy, George O.
 CMSgt. Smith, Thomas A.
 SMSgt. Berz, George F.
 SMSgt. Galbraith, John H.
 SMSgt. Gilyard, Mark S.
 SMSgt. Skawski, Zigmund D.
 SMSgt. Walsh, Debra A.
 MSgt. Agiato, Frank C.
 MSgt. Driscoll, Robert E. Jr.
 MSgt. Evelyn, John A. Jr.
 MSgt. Gray, John F. Jr.
 MSgt. Holmes, Leslie C.
 MSgt. Morin, Robert P.
 MSgt. Wittman, Clifford M.
 TSgt. Jackson, Sonia R.
 TSgt. Labbe, Sean M.
 TSgt. Marshall, Felicia M.
 TSgt. Rawlinson, Ina R.
 TSgt. Rehnberg, Wayne A.
 TSgt. Sandman, Richard G.
 TSgt. Sudduth, Benjamin C.
 SSgt. Boucher, Daniel R.
 SSgt. Bowen, Kenneth M.
 SSgt. Carrier, Heather A.
 SSgt. Diberardino, Shannon
 SSgt. Dutton, David B.
 SSgt. Ferreira, Steven D.
 SSgt. Gagnon, William B.
 SSgt. Ivey, Robert D.
 SSgt. Lessard, Daniel G.
 SSgt. McLaughlin, David B. J.
 SSgt. Norlin, Gary L.
 SSgt. Primiano, Dennis M.
 SSgt. Waterhouse, Dewayne D.
 SSgt. Weinstein, Todd M.
 SRA. Anderson, Roderick
 SRA. Curving, Jason P.

SRA. DeStefano, Teri A.
 SRA. Gibbons, Frederick
 SRA. Gray, Christopher R.
 SRA. Kelfer, James F.
 SRA. LaBelle, Brenda L.
 SRA. LaBonte, Rebecca A.
 SRA. LeClair, Darryl J.
 SRA. McMahon, William J.
 SRA. Plouff, Christopher J.
 SRA. Sadakierski, Mark P.
 SRA. Shea, Kathleen A.
 SRA. Sullivan, Richard L. J.
 SRA. Warren, Jeffrey C.
 SRA. Williams, Reginald
 Amn. Demers, Robin M.
 A1C. Pandolfi, Christopher

Enlistments

SSgt. Doyle, Doran P.
 SSgt. Greene, Richard D.
 SSgt. Hyde, Peter A.
 SSgt. Larkowski, Robert A.
 SSgt. Mouser, Ronald P.
 SSgt. Ricchi, Donald R.
 SSgt. Knight, Jeffrey D.
 SRA. Camilien, Dominique S.
 SRA. Dodge, Kevin C.
 SRA. Spinelli, Eric S.
 SRA. Wood, Alan J.
 SRA. Woska, Charles J.
 A1C Goguen, Christopher J.
 A1C Kelleher, Michael P.
 A1C Manning, Patricia M.
 A1C O'Donnell, Neil J.
 A1C Sackett, Christopher B.
 A1C Siccardi, Alan J.
 A1C Thomas, Paul R.
 Amn. Mariano, Christian V.



Westover assists quake mission

(continued from page 1)

aerial porters to load their vehicles aboard the C-5. They had been scheduled to rehearse a similar scenario at Westover later in January.

Lt. Col. Paul Torpey, operations director for Westover's Northeast Air Station said, "We have been working closely with FEMA for some time. It makes good sense for us to coordinate airlift for them in emergencies such as this one. Westover has the equipment and facilities necessary to move them around.

"As the need arises in the future, I'm sure we'll be giving even more of this type of support," he said.

In 1992 a Westover aircrew flew the communications unit to Florida where they set up communications in the Homestead area following Hurricane Andrew.

EDITORIAL

We met the challenge

The United States Postal Service might accuse me of plagiarism, but I'm going to paraphrase its famous motto anyway.

Neither snow, nor rain, nor sleet, nor the coldest darn weather any of us could remember in a long time could stop the members of the Patriot Wing during the recent QAFA at Westover.

Mother Nature dealt us a cruel hand -- mountains of snow, roads and parking lots like ice rinks and sub-freezing temperatures which slipped on two separate mornings to 20 degrees below zero.

But while the thermometer may have dropped and stayed there, all of you clearly rose to the occasion. I was extremely impressed with the way you overcame all the obstacles -- weather-related and otherwise -- to meet the challenges of this evaluation. I admit that the overall QAFA grade was disappointing to many. But the results did show that we do many things extremely well. You should be extremely proud of this. The results also showed the need for improvement in a few areas. We'll be addressing those issues in the near future. Overall, however, I'm pleased with the results and know that our wing can handle any mission which might come our way in the future. I am proud to be part of a unit made up of dedicated professionals like you. You know how good you are, and you are only going to get better, and this wing will constantly improve the way we do our jobs. That's what's important.

I'm very grateful to each of you for the long hours you put in to prepare for the evaluation. I know that your dedication impressed the evaluators.

Most of all, I am grateful for the way you came together and functioned as a team. That warmed my heart -- even when it was 20 degrees below zero.

Col. James P. Czekanski
Commander, 439th AW

PATRIOT

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Briefs

Rhein-Main ops moving to Ramstein

RAMSTEIN AB, GERMANY (AFNS) -- U.S. and German governments have reached agreement that calls for the phased release of property at Rhein-Main AB to the Frankfurt-Main Airport Authority.

U.S. Air Forces in Europe and the Federal Republic of Germany have completed negotiations concerning future operations at Rhein-Main and Ramstein, according to USAFE officials.

The Rhein-Main property release will be in exchange for phased completion of construction projects at Ramstein. Officials said the release is made possible by the planned partial relocation of theater and strategic airlift forces from Rhein-Main to Ramstein, and the subsequent partial reduction of the Air Force presence at Rhein-Main.

Ramstein's F-16 mission will relocate to Aviano AB, Italy, before the C-130s leave Rhein-Main.

Construction projects at Ramstein will support USAFE's consolidation of airlift forces there, officials said.

Kuwaiti medal criteria changed

The criteria for the award of the Kuwait Liberation Medal has been expanded to include all Air Force members who served in Southwest Asia or its air space between 17 Jan. and 28 Feb. 1991 for at least one day. If these members did not qualify under previous criteria, but will qualify under the new rules, they must submit to Customer Assistance, a copy of their orders and a travel voucher or other means of proof that they were actually in that area.

This information must be submitted to Customer Service no later than 22 April 94.

Open House dates
August 27-28

337th Aircrews receive Aerial Achievement Medals

by MSgt. Gordon A. Newell

During the first week of October, 1993, three Westover aircrews departed on missions to Somalia, which were described by 439th Airlift Wing Commander Col. James P. Czekanski as "more dangerous than anything our crews experienced during the Gulf War."

On Jan. 23, these airmen were recognized for their sacrifices when Lt. Gen. Malcolm B. Armstrong, commander of 21st Air Force, presented each with an Aerial Achievement Medal during a ceremony at the base theater.

"We came here today to tell you how proud we are of what you did and to give to you our assurances that this is not going to be business as usual," the general told the full theater.

Armstrong said that the airlift was unique and very stressful, because senior military staff officers deemed it necessary to fly non-stop from the United States to Mogadishu.

"This would require aircrews to fly for approximately 18 hours straight and stretch their crew day to more than 30 hours. It would also require four or five aerial refuelings," Armstrong said.

Just days before the Westover crews left the Pioneer Valley, the nation watched in horror as 18 American soldiers were killed when their helicopter was shot down in Somalia.

Realizing that the U.S. troops needed armored support vehicles in a hurry, military planners decided to bring in the equipment by airlift.

"The Army needed the armored vehicles badly, said 337th Airlift Squadron pilot Capt. Jeff Hancock. "The missions were very tiring but rewarding, once they were over."

Lt. Col. Peter Gray, another 337th pilot explained that once in Mogadishu, ground time was kept to a minimum.

"Normally it takes between two and

four hours to unload but on these missions, it was done in about 45 minutes.

"The idea, of course, was to get out of harm's way as quickly as possible. There was a very real sense of urgency but we knew it was going to work," he said.

During the ceremony, 25 medals were handed out by General Armstrong.

Award Recipients

PILOTS

Lt. Col. Elmer S. Whittier Jr.
Lt. Col. Peter E. Gray
Lt. Col. Kenneth J. Riley
Lt. Col. Merrill N. Cross
Maj. Aaron G. Olmsted Jr.
Capt. Gary E. Cooke
Capt. Daniel E. Clearwater
Capt. Daniel A. DiCesare
Capt. Jeffrey F. Hancock
Capt. William Rolocut
Capt. Richard C. Tilburg
Capt. Mary K. Travis
1st Lt. Charles W. Parker
2nd Lt. Wilbur C. Biggin II

TSgt. Airton Dapaixao
TSgt. Raymond M. Pries
TSgt. Les L. Schneider
TSgt. Nelson A. Serrao
TSgt. Tracey T. Turner
SSgt. Jeff. K. Antuna
SSgt. Frank A. Domenichella III
SSgt. Christopher Faraone
SSgt. Todd T. Holt
SSgt. David L. Yuhas
Sgt. Joseph G. Fournier

LOADMASTERS

MSgt. Bruce W. Szepekak
MSgt. Elton W. Wiehe Jr.
SSgt. Richard D. Bready
SSgt. James J. Evans Jr.
SSgt. James G. Nichols Jr.
SSgt. Richard P. Titcomb

FLIGHT ENGINEERS

MSgt. Denise M. DeBlois
MSgt. Glenn M. Flynn
MSgt. Henry M. Oleareck Jr.
TSgt. Jon L. Britton Sr.

PATRIOT



Published monthly for Patriots like Capt. Elaine D'Aprile of Salem, Mass., and 2,872 members of the 439th AW at Westover ARB, and geographically separated units.

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