

# PATRIOT

439TH AIRLIFT WING • AIR FORCE RESERVE • WESTOVER ARB

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## Northeast Air Station

# A small unit with a big mission

Article and photo  
by SSgt. Peter Hyde

When Old Saybrook, Conn. Police Sgt. Richard Nigosanti hung up from a phone call in late November of last year, he knew he'd received a gift from above—literally.

Nigosanti got news that a surplus U.S. Army helicopter in Fairbanks, Alaska would soon be donated to his department as a part of Operation North Star, a program that provides excess Department of Defense assets to police departments nationwide for drug interdiction missions.

There was just one problem for Nigosanti and North Star Administrator Dana Cosgrove to overcome; how to get the helicopter from Fairbanks, Alaska to Old Saybrook, Conn.

In a corner office of the base operations building here, two civilians and one Air Reserve Technician man Westover's Northeast Air Station, a small unit with a big mission that had the answer to Nigosanti's problem.

"It was kind of a peripheral thing," explained Lt. Col. Paul Torpey, chief of Westover's Northeast Air Station. "But we were able to, as a result of another airborne mission that was taking us to Alaska, negotiate with the U.S. Army unit in Fairbanks to prepare the helicopter for the return trip and we brought it back. We were even able to help them get it ready."

Mission flexibility seems to be a key element for the Northeast Air Station, which serves Army, Air Force Reserve and National Guard commands all over the United States as part of the armed forces' massive training and readiness program.

Torpey, and his staff, administer "Pad-19," and the well-known "Dogpatch," which serves as a training ground for everyone from U.S. Marines to visiting National Guard units and medical evacu-



**EAGLE'S NEST** — Old Saybrook, Conn. police sergeant, Richard Nigosanti, inspects Eagle 1, in the craft's new home. The Army transferred the chopper, via Westover's C-5, to the town as part of Operation North Star.

ation squadrons. During the summer months, the Pad-19 airhead is alive with activity during training exercises with exotic names like "Patriot Tiger" and "Med Star."

"We don't do anything with anyone who lives here at Westover," Torpey said. "We take care of units that come in from all over the country for yearly training. "Patriot Tiger, for example, is a loading exercise. When the Army shows up in a convoy, we actually load them onto the airplanes and fly them where they're supposed to go. It's good training for them and it's good training for our people as well."

Operation Med Star offers visiting medical evacuation and staging squad-

rons a chance to work on their skills in an environment that's as close to the real thing as possible.

"They live in tents just as they would in the bush and for all purposes it's just like they were in a foreign country," Torpey said. "It's the largest Air Force Reserve medical exercise going. The participants run the whole gamut. Each summer they rotate the units through the area. This year we're expecting approximately 30 different units from bases all over the nation."

The staff of the Northeast Air Station also administers three low-level air routes that originate from Westover and end in the "Bean Bag" drop zone—a kind of prac-

*Continued on page 10*



# McMillan departs after 23 years at Westover

## Aerial port commander takes FEMA position as liaison officer

Article and photo  
by SSgt. Nancy Robbins

Twenty-three years ago, a young captain walked into Hangar 3, having heard that the Air Force Reserve was looking for experienced pilots. He reported to the commanding officer that he was a KC-135 pilot just off active duty, and before even knowing what planes Westover had at the time, he was hired.

Recently, the young captain of yesterday walked out of that very same hangar, having propelled himself all the way to a full-bird colonel - wrapping up a satisfying career not only as a pilot, but as the deputy commander for Aerial Ports as well.

Although Col. Robert J. McMillan is departing Westover, he won't be leaving government service entirely. Instead, he'll continue to serve the Air Force under a new title - as the Air Force Emergency Preparedness Liaison Officer, reporting to the governor and adjutant general of the state of New Hampshire.

"I consider myself very fortunate with the assignments I've had here at



**Col. Robert J. McMillan**

Westover," McMillan said.

During his tenure here, McMillan piloted C-124s, C-130B's, C-130E's, and the C-5A. He acted as chief of Command and Control, and was project officer of Condor Redoubt 1981.

He established and commanded the

439th Airlift Control Flight (which was the first in the Air Force Reserve), served as the commander of the 1683rd Airlift Control Squadron deployed at King Khalid Military City, Saudi Arabia, during Operation Desert Storm, and finally as the deputy commander for Aerial Ports in the 439th Operations group.

During last year's Operational Readiness Inspection, McMillan served as the primary planner for the Wing's deployment force to Camp MacKall, N.C., where he had what he called a real "eye-opening", but pleasurable experience.

"It was utterly amazing to witness what this team accomplished in only four days - deployment by air and bus, setting up a bare-base in the middle of extreme weather conditions, surviving hostile fire and chemical attacks, and rolling and deploying home," McMillan said.

"For a guy like me who is not thrilled about 'camping out', it was a super experience," he added.

Besides his new role as liaison Officer, McMillan will continue to fly international flights for Trans World Airlines in the 767 aircraft.

McMillan was honored at a going-away party at Chateau Provost in Chicheepee on Feb. 5.

McMillan and his wife Joyce reside in Southington, Conn., and have one son and one daughter.

## Official photograph pose accommodates new uniform

by MSgt. Thomas Allocco

Official photos for officers will have a new look in order to accommodate changes in the Air Force uniform beginning Feb. 1.

Air Force Headquarters has announced that officers' official photographs will change from the head and shoulders view to a head and torso view.

This view will allow officers wearing the recently redesigned uniform to display the rank on the sleeve.

The new policy on official photos applies to those wearing either the

current or the incoming uniform.

There is no requirement for officers to obtain a new official photograph. However, Air Force Headquarters encourages officers to obtain a new photograph if their current one is outdated due to a recent promotion or new decoration.

The new uniform, which is now optional, will be mandatory after Oct. 1, 1999.

The Westover photo lab is open for official photos on UTA weekends from 8 a.m. to noon and 1 to 4 p.m. on Saturdays and from 7:30 to 11:30 a.m. on Sundays. Appointments can be made by calling Ext. 3050 on weekdays or 2077/8 on UTAs.



**OFFICIAL PHOTO** - Pictured is the new pose for officers' official photographs.

(U.S. Air Force photo)



# Base funding included in Defense budget

by MSgt. Gordon A. Newell

When President Clinton submitted his budget to Congress, Feb. 7, \$6.1 million was earmarked for two construction projects at Westover Air Reserve Base.

Leroy Clink, base civil engineer, explained that \$5.1 million will be used to reconstruct Golf taxiway and the remaining \$1 million will go to digging up and replacing 20 underground fuel tanks so they will meet 1998 federal and state environmental standards.

Golf is our main taxiway," said Clink. "The entire 3,720 foot length of the taxiway will be converted from asphalt to concrete," Clink said "and 1,200 feet will be reconstructed to straighten a dog leg."

Col. James P. Czekanski, commander of Westover's 439th Airlift Wing was pleased that the funds were included in the budget.

"We are very happy that this is in the budget," he said. There is a lot of competition for money out there with base closure and realignment and reduced federal dollars for defense. I think this is a very positive sign for Westover."

Under the President's defense budget for fiscal year 1995, the Air Force Reserve will have fewer positions and aircraft, but a greater percentage of national defense responsibility.

The budget proposal calls for a reduction of 2,800 positions in the Air Force Selected Reserve from 81,500 in FY 94 to 78,706 in FY 95.

It also recommends lowering the Reserve's total aircraft inventory by 46 from

***"We are very happy that this is in the budget... There is a lot of competition for money out there with base closure and realignment and reduced federal dollars for defense. I think this is a very positive sign for Westover."***

**Col. James P. Czekanski**

542 in FY 94 to 496 in FY 95.

The Department of Defense budget provides for a 1.6 percent pay hike for military and civilian personnel, and \$140 million in transition assistance for reservists and guardsmen affected by force reductions.

The Air Force's \$1.4 billion military construction budget includes \$28,190,000 for the Reserve. In addition to Westover, Reserve projects include:

- Replacing the electrical substation at March AFB, Calif., \$3.9 million;
- Constructing a new fire fighter development center at Dobbins ARB, Ga., \$1.1 million;
- Ensuring the Grissom AFB, Ind., cantonment area meets environmental compliance, \$2.2 million;
- Spending \$500,000 on the industrial waste water pretreatment facility at Youngstown-Warren Regional Airport ARS, Ohio;

- Building a new firefighting training facility with \$1.45 million and using \$750,000 to install air emission control devices at Gen. Mitchell IAP, ARS, Wis.; and setting aside \$5 million to add to and alter facilities for aircraft conversion at an undisclosed location.

The budget proposal must be reviewed by Congress and is subject to change.

In making his announcement, President Clinton pledged he would ensure America has "the best-equipped, best-trained and best-prepared fighting force on the face of the earth."

Although the Reserve and Guard are taking cuts in FY 95 and later, they will have fewer reductions than active forces, according to defense officials. DOD plans to capitalize on proven Reserve and Guard roles, such as strategic airlift and aerial refueling to compensate for the smaller active force.

## Senate confirms William J. Perry as Secretary of Defense

**Washington (AFNS)** -- The senate unanimously confirmed William J. Perry Feb. 3 as Secretary of Defense, replacing Les Aspin, who announced his resignation in December, 1993.

The 66-year-old Perry was Deputy Secretary of Defense when President Clinton tapped him to succeed Aspin after retired Adm. Bobby Inman withdrew his name from consideration in January.

One of Perry's first official acts was to travel to Munich to take part in an annual International Security Policy Conference, said Pentagon officials.

In a statement before the Senate

Armed Services Committee, Perry talked about the United States' continued need for "strong, flexible and ready military forces."

He noted that some 80,000 U.S. military members are deployed around the globe in "peacekeeping, border monitoring, humanitarian relief and deterrence throughout presence."

Perry said the military is carrying out such diverse missions in a period of declining military budgets--a period which, historically, the United States has not managed well.

"This time, we must get it right, or we will pay the cost later either in blood or

treasure or both," he said.

Perry concluded his statement with a quote inscribed on a painting near his office. The photo is of an old soldier praying in church with his family.

"Below it," he said, "are inscribed the words from Isaiah: 'whom shall I send and who will go for us?' The men and women in uniform have responded to the nation's call with 'here am I: send me.'"

"We owe them," Perry said. "I owe them my best possible effort, and they shall have it."



# Intelligence Unit selected for AMC kudos for '93 efforts

by Capt. Paul P. Koscak Jr.

It happened again. Westover's Wing Intelligence Branch garners yet another accolade: Outstanding Reserve Duty Intelligence Unit of the Year.

Presented by Air Mobility Command for achievements in 1993, this latest laurel caps a blitz of awards including a positive rating for the January 1993 Operational Readiness Inspection and the former Military Airlift Command Outstanding Unit Award.

"This is a well-sought-after achievement," said an ebullient Lt. Col. Arch Battista, the unit's commander. "What sets us apart is our ability to deliver."

Deliver they do. Their mission is nothing short of keeping reservists out of harm's way.

Using a network of classified information channels, these military gumshoes anticipate the unexpected, gauge the temperaments of foreign cultures and measure the direction and ferocity of political winds from El Salvador to Somalia.

With Westover's involvement in relief efforts throughout the globe,--particularly Eastern Europe, Latin America



SSgt. Nancy Robbins

**TROOP BRIEFING --** Capt. Chris Donovan, intelligence officer, briefs the 439th CES, prior to their deployment to Germany in February.

and the Horn of Africa-- the intelligence shop is busy these days.

Raw data spiced with insight, analysis and many times knowledge culled from personal visits go into preparing the scores of briefings Westover's 11 intelligence technicians provide for aircrews, deploying reservists and unit commanders.

Yet aside from the obvious attention the world's cauldrons of turmoil demand, even innocuous destinations like Mildenhall Air Base, England, warrant a warning or two.

"We tell them about the dangers of finding a grenade in their suitcase or driv-

ing on the wrong side of the road," said SMSgt. Sgt. Larry Milliken partly in jest.

However, nothing is routine. Dealing with the unexpected keeps the unit on its feet, Milliken said.

For instance, while driving to the base, a radio news report may be the first indication of tension, fighting or terrorist activity somewhere in the world.

Milliken said his intelligence team would then scramble to get further details to include the incident in their briefings.

"Our people deliver a polished package," Battista said.

## Three 439th enlisted Reservists win quarterly honors

by SSgt. Nancy Robbins

SrA Kerry E. Balbirona, 439th Component Reserve Squadron; TSgt. Tammy Vezina, 439th Mission Support Squadron; and SMSgt. Ted Gilfoy, 439th Component Reserve Squadron have been named the 439th Airlift Wing's Outstanding Airman and NCOs for the second quarter of fiscal year 1994.

The local awards committee, chaired by Wing Executive Officer, Maj. Thomas Gray, met in February to select the winners. Also sitting on the committee is the Senior Enlisted Advisor, the president of the Base Advisory Council, a representative from the First Sergeant's Association, and a representative from the Chief's Council.

Squadron commanders are encouraged to submit nominations for deserving individuals, Gray said. The Committee usually meets during the second month of each quarter,

and all commanders are notified of upcoming deadlines.

"Commanders should submit their nominations for the upcoming quarter using AF form 1206, to my office no later than April 30, 1994," Gray said.

Quarterly winners go on to compete for the Airmen of the Year, NCO of the Year, and Senior NCO of the Year.

The Chiefs Council provides quarterly winners with a certificate, and a \$50 bond. Annual winners receive a plaque and a \$100 bond.

The Consolidated Club presents a \$25 gift certificate to annual winners while the Base Exchange provides gift certificates for both quarterly and annual winners.

Morale, Welfare and Recreation will also present gift certificates for annual winners.

Additional information is available from CMSgt. Paul Mersincavage, Ext. 2379, and CMSgt. Marge Basile, Ext. 2042.



# Unsung Patriot: Edwards is 42nd star player

Article and photo  
by TSgt. Sandi Michon

In high school, Mike Edwards was never voted "Most Likely to Succeed," but a decade later, he is a shining success in the 42nd Aerial Port.

Edwards, Unsung Patriot from the 42nd APS, admits the military has brought very positive changes into his life.

TSgt. Edwards, born in New York city in 1963, was raised in Springfield, Mass. He came from a very poor family and was part of a street gang in high school. But after graduation, Edwards traded in one gang for another. He joined the Air Force gang.

"The 42nd is like my gang," said the soft-spoken technical sergeant, "we just do good things instead of bad."

Don't get Edwards started on the good things of the 42nd, because he'll never stop talking. "The aircrews are highlighted most of the time, but we're all part of the team," said Edwards. "When you see these units on location on the network news, it's a good feeling to know you played a part in getting them there."

Col. Bob Kirschling, former 42nd APS commander, calls Edwards the unsung hero of the 42nd. "Whatever he does, wherever he goes, there are always thank you letters and kudos for his job performance," said Kirschling. After flying missions with Edwards, aircraft commanders welcome him on any future flights.

As an air transportation specialist, Edwards serves as a liaison between the C-5 crews and units requiring cargo airlift. He is currently working with personnel from Ft. Devens, Mass. to review Air Force airlift requirements for contingency planning.

"The training he is doing at Ft. Devens is voluntary," Kirschling said. "He is always available to meet the needs of the Air Force. He is a great ambassador for aerial ports, in general, and for everyone in the 42nd."

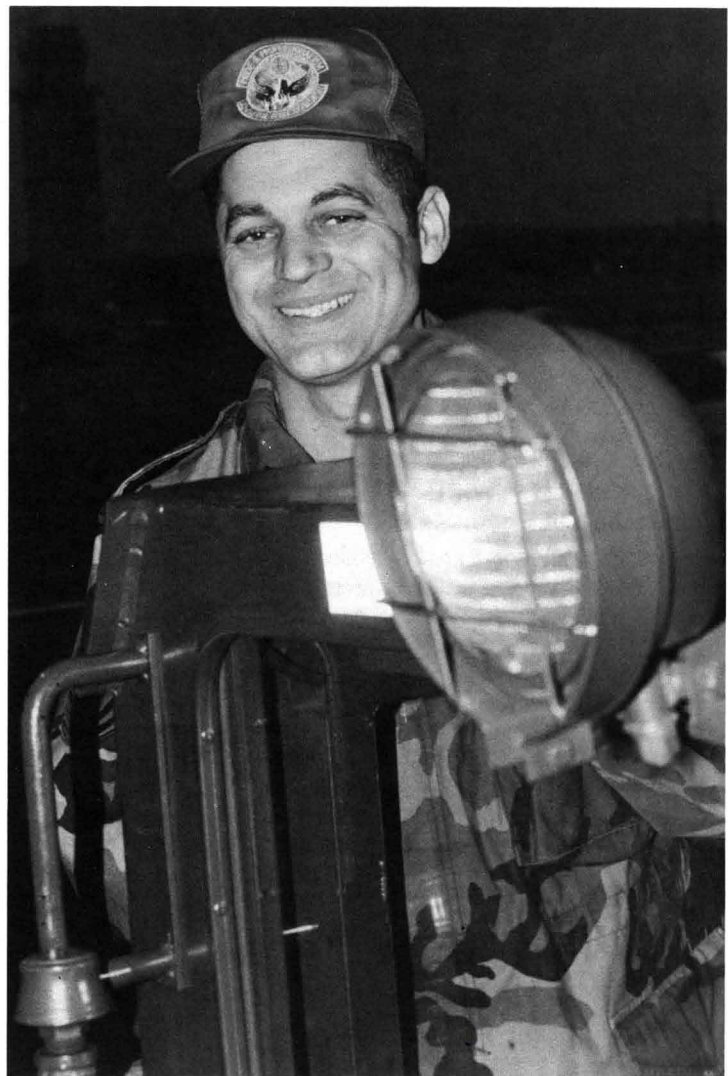
TSgt. Chris McGowen, 42nd APS air transportation craftsman, agrees with Kirschling's evaluation. "He is an excellent performer. He has initiative and drive, and attacks potential problems before they become problems," McGowen said.

Edwards feels he doesn't deserve all the praise. "It's good to know you're doing a good job, but when complimented, I think I'm only doing what I'm supposed to be doing," he said. According to Edwards, overconfidence is a hindrance to the pursuit of excellence.

For Edwards, the 42nd APS is like a second family. After five years active duty service, Edwards enjoys staying with a unit longterm. "Reserve units can better utilize individual strengths, because personnel are not transferred so often," he commented. "You really get to know people." Whether active duty or Reserve, Edwards is sold on the military. "People like to be part of something bigger than themselves. The military is like that. There is opportunity for everyone," he said.

Edwards' supervisors are not the only ones singing his praises. On his off-weekend, he treated his mother, visiting from New York, to a tour of his workplace. After learning of his selection as his unit's Unsung Patriot, she said, "Do a good job on my Michael. I'm always bragging on him to the people at work."

Edwards just smiled, embarrassed as always, at praise for what he deems "business as usual."



**TSgt. Mike Edwards**

## AFA membership drive

The Air Force Association is currently conducting a membership drive, according to Lt. Col. Forrest Price, president of the Pioneer Chapter 111.

Membership to the AFA is open to all enlisted personnel and officers, civilians, active duty and National Guard and Reserve.

The only qualification for membership is the advancement of air power in the defense of our country, Price said.

Membership fees are \$25 for one year or \$60 for three years. A lifetime membership costs \$400.

Anyone interested in joining the AFA may contact Price at extension 3316 or at (413) 536-4973.



# ON THE

## 439th AGS keep Galaxy

Article and photos by



**CHECKING IT TWICE** – TSgt. Heidi Vaughan goes through a pre-flight inspection at Rhein-Main.

On a flying mission, the maintenance men and women are so busy with their jobs that it's easy to forget they are there. But when the aircrew needs help, the crew chiefs of the 439th AGS are their best friend.

The crew chiefs are among the first off the Galaxy and the last to board at every stop during a mission.

When they are not checking, fixing or replacing a faulty part, they roam around the plane. Their hands and eyes are constantly moving and probing for potential problems. The crew chiefs make it their job to know every inch of the big airplane because the entire mission can depend on their finding problems on the ground, rather than in the air.

On a recent five-day mission to Turkey, crew chiefs TSgt. Heidi Vaughan and TSgt. John Arigno earned their pay by watching over and assuring the safety of the Galaxy. They performed pre- and post-flight inspections, tracked down the cause of aircrew "write-ups" of inflight problems, added oil to engines, dickered with maintenance and supply organizations and kept logs on their maintenance activity on flightlines at Dover AFB, Del., Rhein-Main AB, Germany and Incirlik AB, Turkey. Their tasks ranged from replacing a broken light cover to trouble-shooting false warnings from an anti-skid fault light.

At Incirlik problems were discovered with an auxiliary power unit and an air turbine motor that potentially could have kept the Galaxy grounded for days while awaiting the delivery of spare parts to Turkey. Vaughan and Arigno worked with specialists on the ground and coor-

dinated with supply officials to get the two units back on line and the mission continued.

"A good crew chief will save the crew a lot of trouble," said Lt. Col. Daniel Nichols, aircraft commander.

"They take pressure off other aircrew members who are able to get their crew rest and they keep the mission moving on schedule. On the road, the crew chiefs are a very integral part of the crew and we appreciate what they do for us," he said.

The satisfaction of shouldering a big responsibility is one payoff for crew chiefs.

"When it's on the ground, this is our airplane," Arigno said.

A computer programmer who's the father of two grown children, Arigno joined the Air Force Reserve following a 19-year break in service after visiting the 1987 Westover airshow.

"I like the job of crew chief. It's not something I have to do. I'm in the reserve because that's what I like doing," he said.

"The crew chief is suppose to know a little of everything," Arigno said. "We go to an area where there's a problem and if we can't fix it and if there is no specialist, we go through the manuals.

Among their most important tools, carried on the Galaxy are the 67 manuals of technical orders (TOs) that give detailed maintenance illustrations and instructions. Lined up together, they are more than 10 feet of reference material that list, by numbers, the thousands of parts on the 248-foot long Galaxy.

On many nights when the aircrews are in their rooms, the crew chiefs are on the flightline thumbing through the TOs.

"It's a big airplane. There are back-up systems for back-up systems," Vaughan said. That means a lot of small things can go wrong and also many false warnings of problems. In either case, they keep tired crew chiefs out on a moonlit flightline.

"Heidi and I got to Patrick AFB in the early evening and it was midnight before we got off the flightline. We were up again at 5 a.m.," Arigno said.

"We are the last on the airplane. We watch them fire up the engines," Vaughan said.

It can be a hard life, whether on a mission or home at Westover, but Vaughan likes the challenge of working outside the hangars.

"There is satisfaction in being out on the flightline with no big wigs. You're on your own," she said.

"The planes are metal, so they're hot in the summer and cold in the winter. Other maintenance people come out and want the heat turned on. In the summer they ask why isn't there any air conditioning," she said.

Vaughan's easy banter helps get her through the stress of long days in bad weather.

"The aircrews say we didn't fix it right. If you didn't break it, we wouldn't have to fix it, I tell them," she said.

Vaughan served eight years of active duty before becoming an ART crewchief in 1987. She spent the first three weeks of Desert Shield flying and working on a Westover Galaxy almost around the clock.

"I washed my flight suit out in the airplane's washroom and hung it out the



# THE ROAD

## Crew chiefs are moving

MSgt. Tom Allocco



**DOWN A QUART --** TSgt. John Arigno adds oil to a C-5 engine at Rhein-Main AB, Germany, prior to leaving for Turkey.

hatch to dry," she said.

The mission to take aircraft engines and other equipment to Incirlik had hardships on a lesser scale. When they arrived, the Turkish air base was in its fifth day without safe tap water following a water main break.

They spent the night in nearby Adana, a Middle Eastern city of narrow sidewalks bordering endless rows of

squeezed together shops. Coca Cola shared shelf space with lamb heads.

On the streets, modern cars kicked up a fog of dust and swerved around occasional horse drawn carts. After 3 a.m. the staccato honking of car horns receded and was replaced by the chorus of roosters.

The Westover eservists awoke at 5:30 a.m. to the strains of the Muslim call to prayers amplified from speakers in the

minarets of Adana's numerous mosques.

The mission to Turkey flew across an ocean and a continent to Asia and returned home to Westover without varying from its daily schedule by more than a few hours. At every stop the professionalism of the two 439th AGS crew chiefs, among the first off and last on the airplane, kept the airplane and schedule moving like clockwork.



**LINE OF DUTY --** TSgts. Arigno and Vaughn prepare fuel lines before pumping JP-4 onto a C-5 at Incirlik AB, Turkey.



## Black history seminar recognizes heroic contributions

by SSgt. Nancy Robbins

February is designated "Black History Month", and Westover recently hosted a seminar and video presentation honoring the event.

Robert Samuel Fudge, a noted historian, served as the guest speaker of the occasion, where he displayed a video he produced on the local connection of the Tuskegee Airmen - and their contributions to the Army Air Corps since 1939.

Fudge is currently employed by the Service, Adolescent, family Enhancement Program in Springfield. He is also an independent historian who, over the past five years, has produced historic documentaries and won several awards for excellence in broadcasting.

Fudge cited several local citizens who contributed significantly to the role of African-Americans in aviation history.

Fudge's video portrayed several local African-Americans, who were part of the 99th Pursuit Squadron - the first black flying unit trained at Tuskegee, Alabama, the home of Tuskegee Institute, in 1941.

Myra Johnson, personnel assistant, attended the seminar, and was surprised to see an acquaintance on the video. One of the former Tuskegee airmen trainees attends her church. "I was proud to see Marvin Jacobs featured in the video," said Johnson.

Springfield native, Marvin Jacobs, trained with the Tuskegee aviation cadets in 1943, but received a flying deficiency report just one month prior to graduation. "Although I didn't get to fly with my classmates, we kept in touch," Jacobs said.



The 99th Pursuit Squadron later became the 99th Fighter Squadron, and fought throughout the Mediterranean and European Theatres. The unit is best known for two of their greatest claims. First, as a bomber escort group that protected American bombers in their missions deep into Europe, the 99th never lost a bomber to enemy fighters. Secondly, the unit was responsible for the formation of several other black Air Corps units.

Jacobs recalls a letter from Tuskegee pilot, Tom Jefferson, who reportedly shot down five German aircraft in one day. Jacobs looks back on his Army days with mixed emotions. "When I look at my class picture, it is divided equally between those who died and those who made it," he said.

Fudge spoke to the gathering of more than 200 Westover personnel, and a group of school children from the DeBerry School in Springfield.

He stressed that there is not a separation between black history and American history, but they are the same. He emphasized that history is *now*, and stated the importance of daily events as history in the making.

Col. James Gallin, wing vice commander, presented Fudge with a certificate of appreciation.

## Fighting the cold

**COLD WEATHER TRAINING** --Despite record cold temperatures this winter, and more than four feet of snow, Westover's firing range remains open for proficiency training. SMSgt. Winfred Daily, foreground, a member of the 639th Security Police Squadron, tests his skills with an M-16 rifle.

Photo by SSgt. Nancy Robbins





## **EMS first shirt retires**

# **Putting his people first: Guenther's career motto**

by MSgt. Tom Allocco

When airplanes can fly themselves and machines can fix them, we won't have first sergeants, but until then we need reservists like SMSgt. Edward Guenther who take care of their people.

Guenther's retirement as 439th EMS first sergeant in February left a gap in the ranks of Westover's longtime first sergeants who put people first.

For nine years Guenther wore the first sergeant's diamonds. He hung a sign behind his desk in the Hangar 7 orderly room stating the philosophy that guided him. "I am a first sergeant. My job is people. Everyone is my business," the sign said.

During his years as first sergeant, squadron members went through unit transitions from CAMS to FMS to EMS, served through Desert Shield/Storm and met the demands of Westover's expanding role as the Northeast Air Station.

"A good first sergeant will help a unit get through stressful times and that is what he did," said Lt. Col. James Pielli, 439th EMS commander.

"His experience and knowledge of people on base has made my job possible. Without a good first sergeant a commander's job couldn't be done working 14 hours a day. I'll miss him a lot," he said.

On Guenther's last UTA the men and women of the 439th EMS gave their first sergeant the unit's "knuckle buster" plaque as a token of appreciation. He spent his last UTA weekend at his desk plowing through paperwork for his people.

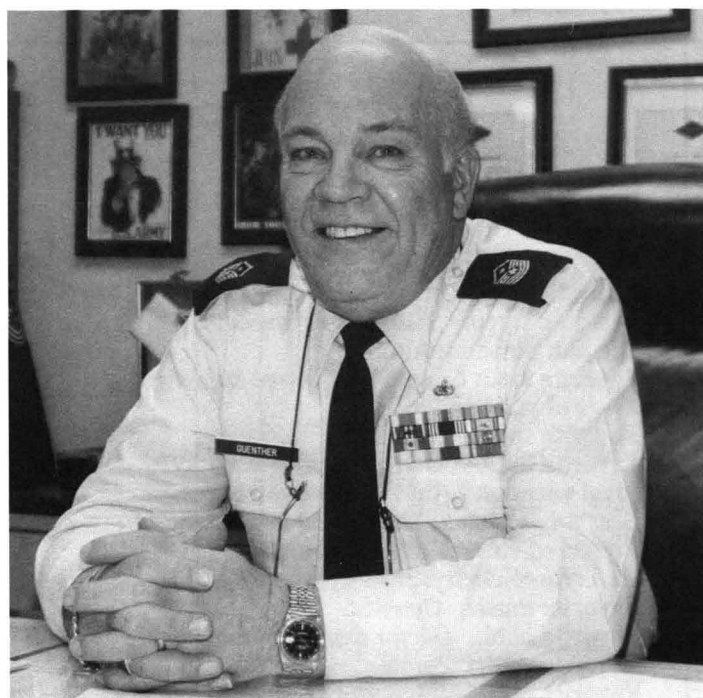
Guenther estimates that over the years he served "on every committee that ever was."

"I like to have a say in my life. I join when asked because I like having a part in what is going on around me," Guenther said.

That's the way it has been since he left his home in New Britain, Conn. at 17 to join the Air Force in 1952. Besides school classes, he was working evenings in a butcher shop and Saturday's in a factory when he enlisted.

"I heard a rumor that the G.I. Bill was going to be canceled and I didn't want to miss it. The rumor proved false, but I didn't regret enlisting because it was easier than going to school and working two jobs," Guenther said.

Following boot camp at Samson AFB, Ithaca, N.Y., he served four years as a telecommunications specialist, including a tour



SSgt. Nancy Robbins

**SMSgt. Edward Guenther**

at Tripoli, Libya.

Guenther came to Westover in 1974 after an 18-year break in service. Before becoming a first sergeant he served as a wing intelligence clerk, wing senior NCO, and chief clerk of the 59th APS.

After active duty Guenther graduated from Central Connecticut State College and earned 59 graduate school credits. He taught elementary classes in Madison, Conn. for 29 years, receiving 29 national science foundation grants, before he retired in 1988.

He has also served as a Madison justice of the peace so long that he has officiated at marriages of couples who he had taught in fifth and sixth grades.

He and his wife, Caroline, are the parents of two daughters and grandparents of six.

In retirement, Guenther will continue to serve as the Madison American Legion Memorial Day parade marshal. He has also promised himself to take extra time for fishing trips to his vacation home near Colorado Springs, Colo. and his daughter's home in Idaho Falls, Idaho.

SMSgt. Patricia Byrnes, former first sergeant of the 439th LSS, is the new 439th EMS first sergeant.

## **Reservists' dental complaints highlight harmful habit**

by Maj. Allen OShana

If your daily grind extends beyond your normal duty hours, Westover's dental officers want to help.

Bruxism, or grinding your teeth, and/or clenching your teeth can cause many maladies. Problems include dental sensitivity to hot and cold or sweets, tooth and jaw soreness, unusual jaw joint sounds (crepitus), and ear pain. Symptoms may include inflammation of the temporomandibular joint, commonly

called TMJ.

Normally teeth meet together about 15 minutes each day. Grinding or clenching one to two hours daily leads to complications. Some patients break, fracture, or prematurely wear down their teeth because of this habit.

There are many theories about the cause of bruxism or clenching. Stress can be a major element, and an improper bite may contribute to the problem.

Sufferers should seek dental help to insure the problem is not disease related,

and for bite-adjustments when possible. Other recommendations include vinyl or acrylic mouthguards to adjust bite and reduce wear, and warm compresses to relax facial muscles and joints.

Over-the-counter medicines such as aspirin and Ibuprofen can relieve discomfort and reduce inflammation. Exercise and stress management may bring long-term relief.

For more information, contact the dental officers at the 439th USAF Clinic at Ext. 3565.



## Patriot People

**Name:** Bob Bersak  
**Rank:** Maj.  
**Age:** 39+  
**Address:** Glastonbury, Conn.  
**Unit:** 439th AW/JA  
**Position:** Deputy Staff Judge Advocate  
**Civilian position:** Attorney  
**Favorite food:** Corned beef on rye sandwich  
**Years of service:** 15  
**Favorite sport:** Softball  
**Favorite hobby:** Doing anything with my kids  
**Ideal vacation:** Anywhere away from office with family  
**Best way to relax:** Sleeping in front of the TV  
**Preferred entertainment:** Movies  
**Favorite celebrity:** John Cleese  
**Favorite music:** Classical  
**Favorite book:** *Doctor Dan the Band-Aid Man*  
**Favorite color:** Purple  
**Favorite car:** 'An old, fully depreciated one  
**Pet peeve:** Filling out forms (like this one)  
**Best thing about Westover:** Comaraderie  
**Worst thing about Westover:** Agencies not open on UTAs



SSgt. Vin Blanchard

Maj. Bob Bersak

## Northeast Air Station helps coordinate helicopter delivery

(Continued from page 1)

tice range for parachute drops north of the base.

Torpey emphasized that Northeast Air Station is important to Westover because it offers neighboring and distant commands vital access to training grounds that might not otherwise be available.

"Sometimes it's difficult when we get calls from an air combat command that needs to use the space for an Operational Readiness Inspection," Torpey said. "The inspectors choose where the unit will be tested and we have to host them for the ORI. But it's incumbent on us to use the facilities for the benefit of everyone. Alive in '95 is what we're all about. We need to show folks that we're here."

Operation North Star Dan Cosgrove already knows.

"There is no way without his (Torpey's) personal involvement that we would have been able to get that helicopter from point A to point B," Cosgrove said. "It's thanks in part to him that the residents of the shoreline in Connecticut were able to save \$1 million on a helicopter."

## Clinic mourns death of TSgt. Bowman

by TSgt. Sandi Michon

A massive heart attack claimed the life of TSgt. Samuel Bowman Jan. 15. The 45-year-old, Wilton, Conn. resident had been a bioenvironmental engineering technician at the 439th USAF Clinic since 1987.

His sudden death left members of the clinic shocked and grieving. "He was really a fun guy to be around," said SSgt. Dino White, health service management support specialist, who gave the eulogy at Bowman's funeral.

According to White, if someone was in need, Bowman was there. "He took care of us," White said.

"It was a shock to everyone at the clinic," said Maj. Allen OShana, dental officer. OShana considered himself a good friend of Bowman's. "He was a genuine pleasure to be around; always helpful, always uplifting. He was some-

one who really used his smile muscles all the time," said OShana, in fond remembrance.

Smiles, and a willingness to help others, were attributes repeatedly attached to Bowman. "He was certainly well-liked, and really helpful. He was a very willing and able worker," said Lt. Col. James Scott, Bowman's supervisor since 1987.

Prior to coming at Westover, Bowman served as a submarine sonar basic maintenance technician with the Navy from 1975 - 1981.

He began his military career with the Air Force as an aircraft maintenance specialist from 1969 - 1973. During his tour of duty in Thailand, he met

his wife, Latta. Besides his wife, he leaves two sons.

As a civilian, Bowman was self-employed as a refuse collection driver. He was active in his community and often served as a volunteer coach.





## EDITORIAL

## Buckle up, it's the law

Motor vehicle smashups are the No.1 cause of accidental death in this country, not to mention an added two million disabling injuries. And "so what" seems to be the response of many.

That attitude really became apparent during the January Quality Air Force Assessment. Nearly half the occupants of vehicles on base were not wearing seat belts.

You'd think by now--particularly with all the irrefutable evidence we have--that buckling up shouldn't be such a hard sell. But it is.

Never mind that wearing seat belts is required by the Air Force. Never mind that as of Feb. 1, it's a Massachusetts law. The main point is seat belts save lives and prevent needless injury. Period.

Yet some libertarian thinkers continue trying to defy the laws of physics. It's their right, they say.

Not when you force others to pay for your irresponsibility.

Is it right to clog the courts with lawsuits that stem from preventable injuries? Or tie up priceless life-support systems to maintain someone's vegetative state? Or to ask insurance companies to foot the bill for avoidable carnage?

Consider the millions that could be saved--the reduced insurance premiums, the curb on health care costs.

That's why wearing seat belts isn't an individual decision.



by Capt. Paul P. Koscak Jr.  
Public Affairs Officer

## Briefs

### Consolidated Club lists new hours

Because of an extensive renovation project as well as a reduction in patronage at the Club, changes in the hours of operation have been made.

Club Manager, John Filler said these measures are temporary and will end when construction progress allows.

Starting Feb. 14, the Club will be closed every Monday and dinner will not be served Monday to Thursday.

The new schedule follows:

#### LOUNGE

Tuesday to Thursday: open 4 to 11 p.m.

Friday: open 4 p.m. to midnight.

#### DINING ROOM

Breakfast: Saturday and Sunday--7 to 9:30 a.m.

Lunch: Tuesday to Saturday--11 a.m. to 1:15 p.m.

Dinner: Friday and Saturday--5 to 9 p.m. Sunday--5 to 8 p.m.

### Top Dollar teams face competition

Westover will field a team to take part in a new Air Force-level competition called Top Dollar, which will test the war skills of Air Force Reserve finance people from six units in April.

Second Lieutenant John Ryan, accounting and finance officer will be the team's leader.

Teams will compete at Camp Swift, Texas, April 18 to 22. Remaining teams will do battle at Camp Swift May 29 to June 3.

The top team will then represent the Reserve in an Air Force-wide challenge later in the year.

### Essay contest

Deadline for the annual Freedom Foundation's military essay contest is May 1.

This year's subject is "Prepared and Proud." For information, call the Foundation at (215) 933-8825.

# PATRIOT

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#### 439th AW Commander

Col. James P. Czekanski

#### Chief of Public Affairs

Gordon A. Newell

#### Wing Public Affairs Officer

Capt. Paul Koscak

#### Public Affairs Specialist

Monica M. Lindberg

#### Editor/NCOIC

MSgt. Gordon A. Newell

#### Deputy NCOIC/Media Relations

MSgt. Tom Allocco

#### Deputy NCOIC/Assistant Editor

TSgt. Sandra M. Michon

#### Staff

SSgt. Vincent Blanchard

SSgt. Peter Hyde

SSgt. Christine Mora

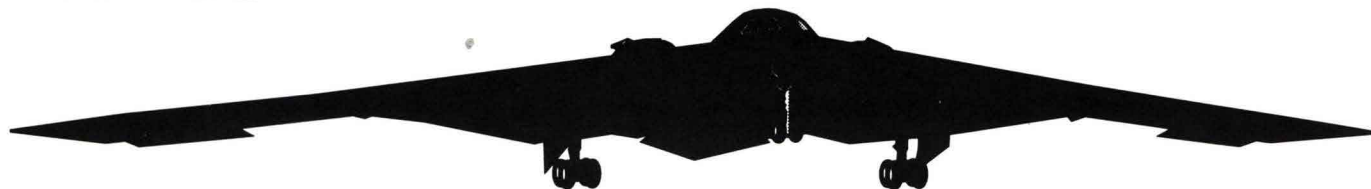
SSgt. Nancy Robbins

SrA. Joseph F. McLean

Karen M. Proulx



# B-2



AFNEWS

## Aircraft buffs will get their fill at open house

by MSgt. Gordon A. Newell

Aircraft enthusiasts from throughout the Northeast will be treated to an aeronautical smorgasbord Aug. 27 and 28 when Westover holds its Open House and airshow in conjunction with the Galaxy Community Council.

"We have put out requests for just about every type of plane the United States military has," said Lt. Col. Gale French, commander of the 439th Operation Support Squadron.

"We have even requested a B-2 bomber from Whiteman AFB, Mo., he said. "I know it's a long shot but we're going to give it a try." The Air Force recently took delivery of the first operational B-2 which is assigned to Whiteman and the craft will make appearances at several shows this year, French noted.

"One of the most popular planes that

appeared here during our 1992 show was the Marine Corps AV-8B Harrier and we are sure they will be back this year," he said.

In addition, French expects to attract an F-117 stealth fighter which performed so well during Desert Storm and which made its first appearance ever at Westover in 1992.

Headlining the show this year will be Canada's famed jet demonstration team, the Snowbirds and the U.S. Army's spectacular Golden Knights parachuting team. Canadian and British jump teams have also been invited.

Other exotic aircraft on the menu include the U-2 spy plane, the B-1 bomber and an F-18 Hornet.

Invitations have also been extended to the Royal Australian Air Force, the German Air Force and Britain's Royal Air Force.

French also said that the Galaxy Community Council is working out details to bring World War II and other vintage aircraft to the base for the show.

"It has become tradition during the past few Westover air shows to try and have something of interest for everyone who attends," said French. "We hope to continue that tradition this summer.

"Crowds here have been fantastic over the years. Many crew members who are stationed around the country came through the base during Desert Shield and Desert Storm and remember the warm welcome they received. They want to come back to reminisce and to say thanks for the treatment they received then," he said.

There is no admission charge for the open house. Gates will be open daily from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

# PATRIOT



Published monthly for Patriots like SSgt. Mark Bush of New Haven, Conn., and 2,855 members of the 439th AW at Westover ARB, and geographically separated units.

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