

PATRIOT

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Southern Watch tour is mix of tedium, stress

by MSgt. Tom Allocco

The effort to keep watch over Iraq is no longer front-page news, but for thousands of airmen, an assignment to Operation Southern Watch, while poised between war and peace, continues to demand around-the-clock vigilance.

MSgt. James DiVita of the Wing chapel staff recently experienced the mix of tedium and stress during a 15-day tour as a volunteer with the 363rd Air Expeditionary Wing at Prince Sultan Air Base in northern Saudi Arabia.

DiVita served at the Saudi Arabian base with about 3,500 active duty members and reservists who maintain F-15, AWACS and KC-135 operations in support of the Southern Watch campaign to enforce the no-fly zone in Southern Iraq and deter Iraqi aggression. The Americans share the base with smaller numbers of British and French allies. Active duty members serve one-year tours, with reservists pulling tours from 15 to 90 days.

DiVita worked afternoon and evening shifts in the base chapel, in which duties included visiting security forces in bunker outposts around the perimeter. One of his sadder duties was to conduct a prayer service when a woman security specialist fell from a Humvee and was killed while on patrol.

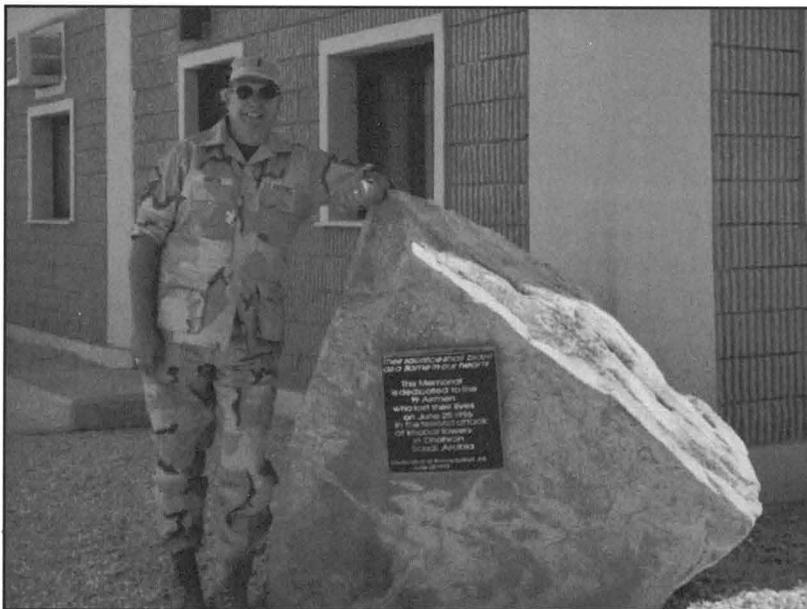
"Generally, morale is high, but the wartime atmosphere is always present. Everywhere, there is barbed wire, machine gun posts, infrared equipment and Humvee patrols," DiVita said.

"The operations side of the base was about 15 miles away from billeting. To get there you had to go through half a dozen checkpoints manned by American security

forces," DiVita said.

A regular feature of duty at the Saudi Arabia air base are "bunker runs" when sirens signal a race for bunkers to be prepared for an attack.

Members could stay in touch with their families by sending e-mail home, but all messages were subject to censorship for security reasons.



AEF DUTY — MSgt. James DiVita, 439th AW chaplain's assistant, stands next to a memorial in Saudi Arabia for the 19 airmen killed in the attack on Khobar Towers in 1996.

An Olympic size swimming pool helped take the edge off daytime temperatures averaging 95 to 100.

For exercise, DiVita walked three miles around the perimeter each evening. Other recreation was limited to dayroom TVs, free movies and basketball and volleyball. Three-hour round-trip bus rides to shop in the Saudi Arabia capital of Riyadh were also available.

With the experience of three decades of service, including eight months of active duty during the Gulf War, DiVita was able to bring a special perspective to his job as

NCOIC of the Prince Sultan AB chaplain service section.

"The best part for me was the opportunity to visit many of the troops. Many of them have been away from home under tough conditions for a long time and they welcomed us with open arms. There were even a few reunions with people I had met over the years. Even after 30 years, the experience in Saudi Arabia gave me a renewed appreciation for those who serve in uniform," DiVita said.

"When you travel to remote bunkers where the only Americans are security forces in desert BDUs, heavily armed as they sit and watch the border you realize how tense that part of the world still remains almost 10 years after Desert Storm. It takes dedicated men and women to maintain that line of defense," DiVita said.

Getting things done

I want to start by recognizing our folks who have received higher headquarter's recognition for the way they have been "getting things done". MSgt Ron Chevalier Jr., 439 AW/XP, is the 22nd Air Force Logistics Plans and Programs Manager of the Year; Airman Cornelia Babcock, 439 ASTS, is the 22nd Air Force nominee for the 12 Outstanding Airmen of the Year; and MSgt Bill Pope, 439 AW/PA, won first place at AFRC for Illustrative Art and Information Graphics categories. Each will now compete at command level. Congratulations!

There has been another change in the way we get things done. This one deals with TDY. When the Travel and Transportation Reform Act of 1998 became law, it stated that the government Visa travel card would be mandatory for all federal employees effective 1 March 2000. This was done to reduce the travel costs to the government both in money and personnel to run the system.

This change impacts us in a couple of ways. First, if you perform government-related travel you must get the credit card. Second, you must use the credit card in the completion of your travel. The Department of Defense is working out exactly what that means, but for now you must charge any related travel expense that you can pay with a credit card to your government Visa card. Items like airline tickets, lodging, rental car, gas, airport parking, and restaurant meals should be charged when the facility accepts the card. We will continue to maintain a Central Billing Account (CBA) at 439 AW/FM for TDY airline tickets purchased here at Westover, so you won't see those charges on your Visa bill. My bottom line guidance to you is get the card and use it to pay for your **government-related** travel expenses while you are TDY. This is a tool to be used by you to complete our mission. Like any other government tool, it is not to be abused.

By the time you are reading this we will have welcomed a new partner on board Westover. I want to say thanks and farewell to our departing employees who have served this installation so well. I welcome the employees of Griffin Services and Maytag Aircraft Corporation who will be teaming up with us to perform the mission here. I am serious when I say "partner." The continued successful future of mission accomplishment at Westover will depend in large part on us getting the job done as a team. Keep that in the forefront as we transition this year into a new way of GETTING THINGS DONE!

by Col. Martin M. Mazick
439th AW Commander

Commentary

Briefs

Wing announces Quarterly awards

A Quarterly Awards selection board has named the outstanding Airman, NCO, Senior NCO, Officer and Civilian employees for the second quarter of Fiscal Year 00.

Congratulations to the following individuals:

Airman of the Quarter:

SrA Ellen Vanloon, 439 MDS

NCO of the Quarter:

TSgt. Kenneth P. Wolff, 58 APS

Senior NCO of the Quarter:

SMSgt. James C. Walker, 439 MXS

Officer of the quarter:

1Lt. James C. Miller, 337 AS

Civilian of the Quarter:

Deborah Heady, 439 SPGT

Supervisor of the Quarter:

Linda S. Reith, 439 SPTG/DPF

Armed Services YMCA sponsors essay contest

The Armed Services YMCA and the U.S. Naval Institute are co-sponsoring a Millennium 2000 essay contest for the youths of military communities worldwide, including reserve, National Guard and DOD civilians.

The contest is open to children from pre-school through high school. More than 20 U.S. Savings Bonds will be awarded to top entries.

For details and contest criteria are available on the Armed Services YMCA Website at www.asymca.org. Deadline for entry is March 31, 2000.



Great New England
Air Show
August 12—13

April UTAs
A UTA April 1-2
B UTA April 15-16

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337th AS members honored after mishap

Article by MSgt. Sandi Michon
Photo by MSgt. W. C. Pope

Ten members of the 337th Airlift Squadron and two maintenance reservists received Air Force commendation medals for their adept handling of a C-5 mishap in Alaska one year ago.

On a mission to transport army staff and equipment for winter maneuvers in Alaska, the Westover crew landed at Eielson AFB at Fairbanks. While preparing to offload equipment, Flight Engineer TSgt. Scott Pashko discovered a fire had broken out in a wheel in the main landing gear.

Despite frigid temperatures hovering at -38 degrees, the aircrew swung into action. Pashko notified the pilots, who called the fire department for assistance.

Loadmasters evacuated 73 passengers from the plane, and pilots and engineers cut all power to the aircraft and followed emergency procedures. Outside, Pashko hauled a 315-pound fire extinguisher over to the wheel well and began to spray down the fire.

Maj. Dan Smith, 337th AS pilot took command of the flight deck operations, and aircraft commander Lt. Col. Peter Gray found another extinguisher and brought it to Pashko. Passengers were ushered a safe distance from the aircraft and watched carefully

for signs of frostbite.

The aircrew performed all emergency procedures "by the book", and Pashko was on his third extinguisher when the fire department arrived to finish the job. Eielson AFB Fire Chief Mr. Ken Miller said the crew did an outstanding job of containing the fire.

When the aircrew's job was done, the maintenance challenge had just begun. "The wheel repair and cleanup was shouldered by TSgt.

Bruce Yargeau [439th AGS crew chief]," explained Gray. "He ordered parts, coordinated maintenance crews, and worked for days in the sub-zero weather."

Gray said he couldn't be more pleased with how the crew did their job. "It's times like these that professionalism and teamwork really shine," he said.

Pashko received the Air Force Commendation for an Act of Courage. According to the award narrative, "Pashko's brave efforts prevented extensive damage to a valuable aircraft."

The remaining crew members received the Air Force Commendation for Outstanding Achievement.

According to Lt. Col. Michael Vinskey, 337th AS commander, "the crew acted with selfless dedication and performed in a highly professional manner. Their efforts prevented injury and they were responsible for limiting severe damage to a valuable Air Force asset."



The award recipients were presented their medals during the January UTA by 337th AS Commander, Lt. Col. Michael Vinskey (standing at left).

Medal recipients

Lt. Col. Peter Gray
Maj. Daniel Smith
1st. Lt. David Capuano
SMSgt. Robert Karrasch
MSgt. David Wilson
MSgt. Robert Morin
TSgt. Christopher Hellyar

TSgt. Kenneth MacDougald
TSgt. Scott Pashko
TSgt. Mark Pleva
SrA. Edward Wilchinski III
TSgt. Paul Barbosa
TSgt. Bruce Yargeau

Civil Engineers participate in "Silver Flag"

Forty members of the 439th Civil Engineer Squadron took part in "Silver Flag" at Tyndall AFB, Fla. in December. The Westover civil engineers received hands-on-training with (left) the General Purpose Expandable Shelter and (right) the Mobile Aircraft Arresting System.

—photos by TSgt. Robert Brown, 439th CES



SMSgt. Brault captures top finance honors

by SSgt. Andrew Reitano

A member of the 439th Comptroller Division was recently named the AFRC Financial Management and Comptroller of the Year Award in the senior NCO category.

For SMSgt. Glenn Brault, the honor came as a pleasant surprise.

"I was surprised because I didn't even know I had been nominated for the award," he said. "I had talked with Capt. [John] Ryan [OIC] about submitting a package, but I didn't know he had followed through on it." This marks the second consecutive year the unit has had an individual capture an AFRC-level annual award. TSgt. Jennifer Lavigne won the NCO category for 1998.

According to Brault, winning the award is not only a reassurance that he is doing his job, but serves as a driving force to do even better. "It's nice to receive this award because it shows that the time and effort I put into the Reserve and Finance are worthwhile," said Brault. "Once things are written on paper and people review them, they realize a lot has been done, and it's time to recognize this individual."

Whether it's processing vouchers or writing an EPR, Brault sets out on every task to achieve personal fulfillment. "I do a lot of things, and there are people watching and recognizing what I'm do-

ing, but on top of that, I get personal satisfaction from the work I do. It gives me that extra push to want to do more," he said.

Brault has been involved at AFRC headquarters and belongs to a financial reservist working group, which sets policy for training and other issues.

"I'm well known amongst the headquarters staff and I volunteer for a lot of outside projects for them (projects not solely related to Westover)," said Brault. "If you get your name and face out there, enough, when it comes time to make decisions and compare one person to the next, you will be recognized." Brault attributes the recognition to the leadership's way of saying thank you.

Teamwork and support from superiors and subordinates are also important to individual success, especially at Westover where Finance has only

seven reservists compared to 20 or more at other bases. "I need everyone here. As a senior NCO, I train the people that I have," said Brault. "Their successful actions not only reflect on them, but myself as well. If they're performing well and doing outstanding work, that's an indication that I'm doing my job correctly."

This is the second major command-level award Brault has won. In 1988, he won NCO of the Year in the finance division. According to Brault, winning awards won't change his attitude or work ethic, but only strengthen them. "When you get recognized with something like this, it gives you that extra motivation to perform consistently because you know your work is benefiting to others and it's worthwhile," he said. "Now that I've been recognized, I expect more of myself, and I have to live up to what people expect of me. It's to my advantage to work harder."

"Now that I've been recognized, I expect more of myself,"

SMSgt. Glenn Brault



Federal credit union offers financial edge

by MSgt. Tom Allocco

Membership has its privileges, but if you're not aware of your benefits as a member of the Westover family, you may be missing out on many financial advantages. Eligibility to belong to the Western Mass. Federal Credit Union is one of the "quiet" benefits that it is too easy for many Westover reservists and civilians to overlook.

The non-profit Western Mass. Federal Credit Union is member-owned and operated and not open to the general public. Membership has been a benefit available to Westover civilian employees and members of any branch of the service since the mid-1980s.

"We operate on the principle that we are big enough to serve you and yet small enough to know you. Starting with their first \$5 deposit in a share savings account, members have a share in the ownership and are eligible for personal attention in a wide range of financial services," said Leonard J. Frigon, president and manager of the credit union.

Savings programs at the Western Mass. Federal Credit

Union include share savings accounts, Christmas clubs, vacation clubs, special accounts, share draft (checking) accounts and certificates of deposits. Credit union members are eligible for a full range of loan programs, from personal loans to home equity loans.

The credit union also recently opened a worldwide ATM program through the PLUS network.

Other services include:

- discounted auto insurance.
- a discounted special loan program with Enterprise Rental car sales.
- new and used car loans.
- life and disability insurance.
- discounts with area businesses, including Chicopee Chevy Olds Cadillac, Town Fair Tire and local theaters.

The Western Mass. Federal Credit Union is open during regular business hours and on Saturday mornings at 129 Church St., Chicopee; and 14 Franklin St., Westfield. For more information, call the credit union at 592-6348.

C-5 loadmasters expect the unexpected

Story and photos by Gordon A. Newell

If there is one thing certain for a C-5 loadmaster while on the road, it is that nothing is certain.

Take for instance a recent trip leaving Westover ARB to carry Navy cargo from Naval Air Station Norfolk, Va.

The mission cut called for the crew to stay in Norfolk the first night; make a fuel stop at Westover, then head to NAS Rota, Spain. After about 20 hours crew rest, the mission was to head back to Norfolk and then home to Westover.

Sharing loadmaster duties were MSgt. Gary Smith, a music teacher in Ware, Mass.; TSgt. David Benson, a firefighter in Springfield, Mass.; SSgt. Richard Spoor, a firefighter in New Bedford, Mass.; and SSgt. Greg Levangie, a student.

The first leg of the mission went smoothly. When the C-5 landed at Norfolk, the Rigid Inflatable Boards (RIBs) that were to make up the largest part of the load, were waiting on the ramp, sitting atop their prime movers (or tractor).

The plan was to "kneel" the back of the



OFF-LOADING RIBS – SSgt. Richard Spoor, forward and MSgt. Gary Smith, rear, guide a prime mover and its Rigid Inflatable Boat safely off the C-5's ramp at NAS Norfolk after a four-day mission to Rota,

Galaxy, drive the prime movers into place and load the remaining palletized cargo.

The first surprise of the day came when the Navy informed the loadmasters that the prime movers were not to accompany the RIBs to Rota. Prior to this the boats had been driven onto the aircraft and tied into place, according to Smith.

"Getting the first boat into place was a learning experience," he admitted. "But we learn early on that things seldom go as planned so we must be flexible."

The prime mover carried the RIB halfway into the cargo compartment and then was backed out of the plane, leaving the boat and trailer to be pushed, pulled, tugged and winched into place.

The same tedious procedure was used to haul the second craft into place and after much sweating and straining, the RIBs were safely in and tied down to the floor of the aircraft.

Meanwhile Spoor had discovered that some of the pallets that were to be placed into the remaining cargo area were improperly configured.

"Safety is our primary concern," said Smith. "We felt the pallet was unsafe to load onto a C-5 because of weight limits so we decided the cargo would have to be broken down and re-palletized."

By this time, more than four hours had passed since the C-5 touched down at Norfolk so it was decided to load the remaining cargo early the next morning.

After an uneventful, if not arduous on-load the next day, the aircraft stopped at Westover for fuel before the nearly eight-hour haul across the Atlantic.

Off-loading at Rota took nearly as long as the on-load at Norfolk so again, the loading for the return trip was delayed until 'oh-dark-thirty' the next morning.

With the assistance of Spanish civilian workers it still took about four hours to get the two alternate RIBs and the remaining cargo headed for Norfolk, onto the Galaxy.

During a well-deserved rest on the flight home from Norfolk, Smith reflected four-day journey.

"This was a particularly physical mission that required a lot of pushing and pulling," said Smith "But after a while, the job becomes second nature. You meet unexpected but interesting challenges, like we did on this mission."

"Every person on the crew has a job to do and is part of a team. We need to depend on each other to handle this big airplane and to get the mission done."



CANINE CARGO – Muldoon, a chocolate Labrador retriever which was part of a PCS move, was one of the more pleasant surprises encountered by 337th AS loadmasters on the recent trip to Spain. MSgt. Gary Smith, left, and SSgt. Gary Levangie let the pooch get some fresh air during a fuel stop at Westover.

Husband-wife runners

by Capt. James Bishop

It was a match that could have been made on the pages of *Sports Illustrated*. They met on the first day of track practice for the 3rd Air Force track and field team at RAF Lakenheath, England, early in 1992. One year later they married and ran a 15-kilometer race for their honeymoon.

Maj. Rodney Furr and his wife 1st Lt. Theresa Furr have garnered some 200 trophies between them, have run a combined total of nearly 1,000 races and 46 years of running and racing experience.

"I don't dust them," she said. They sit on a shelf in the basement.

The two met while on active duty in England--she was stationed at Lakenheath and he was at RAF Mildenhall.

He proposed to her one crisp autumn day on a grassy hillside overlooking the finish area at the championships for United States Air Forces in Europe at Hahn AB, Germany. She had just won the women's 5,000-meter race, and he had just placed second in the men's 10,000-meter run.

Each year, on their anniversary, they run a race in New England. In 1998, they competed in the 15-kilometer "Run Around the Block" at Block Island, Rhode Island.

On base, he works as the logistics group executive officer and she works in the wing commander's office. At home, they share everything from training tips to the runner's diet (lots of pasta, beans, and rice, no junk food and not much red meat).

"But I know I can hit McDonalds and not worry about gaining a lick of weight. I'll just run it off the next day," he said.

His long career began with less

dignity than one might imagine. During his first track practice as a high school freshman, the team was running a continuous relay--run 400 meters, hand off the baton, and get back in line.

"I was wearing the old cotton gray sweats and, unknown to me, my pants had a faulty drawstring," he said. It broke about 300 meters into his first lap. His pants slithered down around his ankles and he went flying forward. "The guy I was running against started laughing so hard he fell down too," he said.

Mr. Coffee blinks on at 3:15 a.m. in the Furr household during training season. Rodney Furr rises 15 minutes later for the first of two runs that day. He can log over 15 workout miles a day. "After having run and raced for so long, I don't need much of a motivating factor," he said. "The weather really doesn't

matter to me. I know the training has to get done if I'm going to continue to excel." At age 36 the personal records, or PRs in runner's lingo, are still coming.

The hard work shows. He ran the 1500-meter race in four minutes flat--a pace that would have won the event in the Olympics event earlier this century and is now still considered, well, very fast.

While stationed at Mildenhall, he won the United Kingdom Sports Conference and the USAFE cross-country titles, as well as racking up UKSC wins in the 800-meter, 1,500-

meter, 5,000-meter and 10,000-meter.

He's been racing since 1978, but he started running just to get in shape for basketball tryouts his freshman year. He ended up running four years of track, setting the school mile record of 4:45 his senior year.

From there, he walked onto the Texas Christian University track team...and walked off at the end of his freshman year. He started road racing

the fall of his sophomore year and got back into track racing again when he was stationed in England by running on the 3rd AF track and field team. Some days they run together. One winter day, for example, they got up at 4 a.m.

and ran a "slow" three miles together before she went to work as executive assistant to the vice president of human resources at Yankee Candle.

Theresa Furr ran junior and senior high track in Iowa, gathering "several pounds" of state championship medals. She ran for the Cornhuskers at the University of Nebraska and for the Iowa State University before hanging up her spikes to concentrate on a bachelor's degree in hotel and restaurant management. She worked in her profession two years, then enlisted, spending four years at Lakenheath.

In England, she started running competitively again and won 16 individual UKSC and USAFE track and cross-country titles. A 1993 knee injury took her out of the rigors of competitive running.



Maj. Rodney Furr



BREAKING TAPE — Maj. Rodney Furr wins the 5,000 meter Pennacook, N.H. "Winter Challenge" in February 99.



1st Lt. Theresa Furr

ack up hundreds of victories

Which was the most important win to her? None stand out, she says. "You go from race to race and put past wins behind you."

"That's her midwestern modesty," Rodney Furr says of his wife's downplaying her victories. But the victories themselves stem from her upbringing too--subsistence farming in New Hampton, Iowa, he said, which bred her strongest asset: perseverance.

"Walking the beans"--weeding soybeans--became her Midwestern version of "Just Do It."

But she's no pushover. "I am competitive," she said. She once elbowed someone in an indoor track race that was trying to cut in on her lane. She won the race.

Coincidentally, Rodney Furr also grew up farming. As the only boy among five children, he remembers

learning a "tough-it-out" work ethic planting vegetables by hand with his father and weeding throughout the hot summers in Corrales, N.M.

So years later, when a professional coach tells him he has to run hard for three hours straight, or she has to do 15 400-meter sprints in quick succession, they do it.

Currently, the Furs live and train in Vernon, Vt.

With all that training, is running an addiction? "I can't say I'm addicted, but after running and racing for so long, this sport has become a way of life," Rodney Furr said. "One can compete for life. There are open, masters, senior, veteran and grand master competitions right up to the world championship level. There is nothing like watching some 70-80 year old guys and gals run with the gusto of high-schoolers," he said.

Being married to a runner causes each partner to motivate the other, Theresa Furr said.

"It's the one thing we've really had in common. Not a day goes by that we don't talk about running."



NO COLD FEET — 1st. Lt. Theresa Furr running in the 5,000 meter "Winter Challenge" in New Hampshire.

A training year in the life of a competitive runner

by Capt. James Bishop

A traditional track athlete, Rodney Furr tends to make the outdoor track season (April through July) his meat and potatoes. Next, indoor track season (December through February) finds him running and winning races from Bangor, Maine to Princeton University in New Jersey, or the Saw Mill River 10K Road Race on New Year's Day in Montague Center, Mass., where he finished 2nd in a field of 100 runners.

Most years the fall is an off-season for him where he'll compete sparingly and use that time to rest, heal, and cross train.

He takes two full weeks off from any activity in late July after the outdoor season ends. Then he begins short, easy runs in August (to mortals, that means running five to ten miles a day at a seven-minute per mile pace).

He begins weight lifting two to three times a week in August. In September he increases the training to two times a day Tuesday through Friday, then gets in some long running, up to 15 miles per day on weekends. On Mondays he rests.

In October and November he adds hill repeats once a week plus some shorter faster runs, as well as increasing the long run on Sunday. And in December comes the harder speed work (intervals on the track or grass) to get ready for indoor racing.

A typical week in November looks like this:

Monday - total rest

Tuesday - a.m.: weight lifting
p.m.: two miles easy/four miles hard/
two miles easy

Wednesday - a.m.: four to five miles
easy p.m.: eight miles easy

Thursday - a.m.: weight lifting
p.m.: quarter mile hill repeats

Friday - a.m.: four to five miles easy
p.m.: eight miles easy

Saturday - six to eight miles with accelerations of two to five minutes with same time of rest

Sunday - long easy run of 12 - 15 miles



During a typical indoor season he tries to compete every other week to allow a hard week of training, followed by a taper and race week.

After a few easy weeks in March he then competes on two or three road races combined with speed work to get ready for the outdoor season. He usually starts meets in mid-April and competes every other week until late-May, early-June. During a competitive season he never trains twice a day. After a competition he takes two days off to recover.

Reservist goes out of her way to make a difference

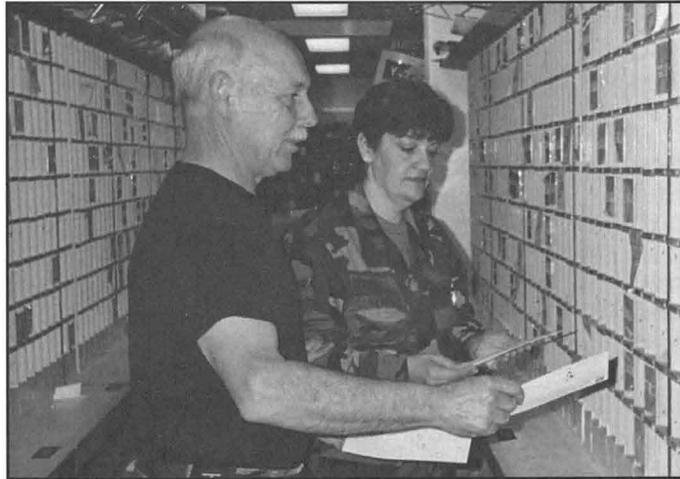
by SSgt. Andrew Reitano

While the majority of Reservists spent the holidays at home, with their families, one Westover member left home and her family to help fellow service members who couldn't be home.

SSgt. Louisa Gonzalez, an Information Management craftsman with the 439th Airlift Wing, spent 15 days at Kadena Air Base, Okinawa, Japan, unloading and sorting tons of mail destined for the airmen, soldiers, sailors, and Marines stationed on Okinawa.

According to Gonzalez, this is the first time she has ever gone on a "mail run" TDY. "It's an experience every Reservist should have. You're able to see right there and then how the mail is processed and distributed," she said.

Gonzalez volunteered for the assignment for several reasons, one being that she wanted to work with the active duty force. "Being a Reservist, I wanted to interact with the active duty people to observe how they work. This



MAKING THEIR DAY — SSgt. Louisa Gonzales, 439th CS reservist, sorts mail for personnel stationed at Kadena Air Base, Okinawa, Japan during the Christmas holiday.

was an opportunity that gave me the advantage to do this," she said.

Although Gonzalez spent only a short time at Kadena, she left behind several new friends and was asked to come back next year. "I went to Kadena to work, and I received a tremendous amount of satisfaction from the work I did," said Gonzalez. "It doesn't matter what career field you're in, there is always something

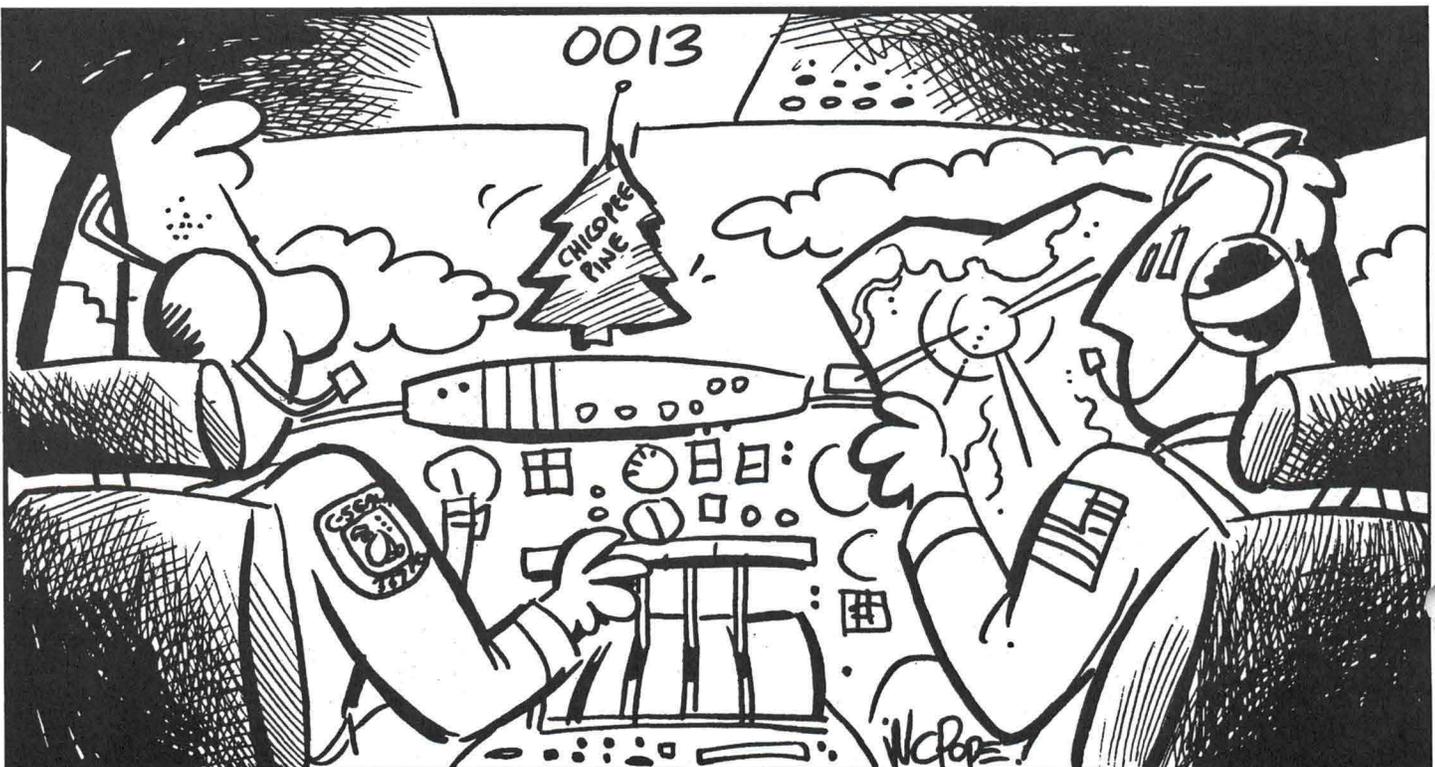
to learn."

When stationed thousands of miles from home, receiving mail is an enjoyable experience. Gonzalez had the opportunity to be a part of this experience by assisting in the process. "You should have seen these people's faces when I handed them their packages," said Gonzalez. "It's nice to be on the 'giving' side. Whenever I gave a person mail, I got a big smile. They were so grateful the mail was on time. Making a difference in someone's life is a plus for me."

For Gonzalez, deciding to go wasn't the easiest decision to make, but it wasn't the hardest either. When it came to

showing her family the value of helping others and not taking things for granted.

"I know what my home life is like. I know who I have at home," said Gonzalez. "The people at Kadena are far from home. I wanted to show that we have people at Westover who are willing to go out of their way, even on the holidays, to make a difference."



Coburn takes over as full-time chief of security

by SSgt. Charlie Cangemi

Westover welcomed Capt. Ronald E. Coburn Jr. last December as the new full-time chief of security, filling the technician slot vacated by Maj. Mary Ann Lutz, who is now a physical security specialist at the Philadelphia Mint.

Although Lutz has left the ART position, she is still commanding the unit as a traditional reservist, with Coburn serving as deputy chief of security forces and senior ART.

Coburn has spent the last 12 months as a security officer reservist with the 610th SFS at NAS Fort Worth Joint Reserve Base, Texas. He left a full-time position as a chemist for the Texas Natural Resources Conservation Commission where he studied environmental pollutants.

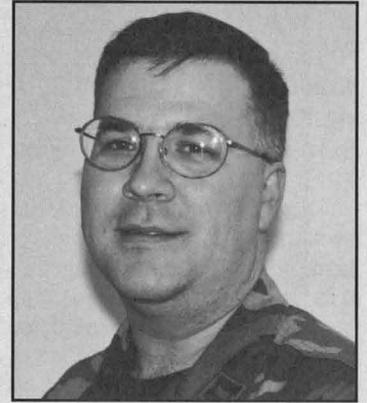
"I enjoyed my job as a chemist but it was time to make the military my full-time job," Coburn says. "This fits my lifestyle — I've done this, I've trained for this, now it is time to apply myself to the current challenges."

The captain says he will spend the next six months evaluating the unit to see where he needs to focus his energy. While providing Westover with the safest environment possible, he will strive to maintain a positive relationship between security personnel and other ART's and reservists on base.

"I don't want to see an 'us versus them' mentality," he says.

"I enjoyed my job as a chemist but it was time to make the military my full-time job."

Capt. Ronald E. Coburn



Seeing himself as a "conduit," Coburn will work closely with Lutz and be sure to keep her informed. Continuity between the full-timers and the reservists is important, he says.

Coburn says that he's at Westover for the "long haul" and set his long-term goal to command the support group.

Although he now lives in Rhode Island, Coburn plans to move his family to Brimfield, Mass. His wife Jane is expecting a new baby in June who will join his other two children: Sebastian, 3, and Kiernan, 9 months.

Three units receive AF Outstanding Awards

by Maj. Sally Nutt Morger

About 340 Reservists at Westover recently earned a new ribbon for their uniforms and a streamer for their unit flags when their units won the coveted Air Force Outstanding Award.

The 439th Civil Engineering Squadron, the 58th Aerial Port Squadron, and the 439th Medical Squadron formally received their awards during separate ceremonies over the February "A" UTA. It was a first-time award for each of the units.

The men and women of the 58th APS, commanded by Lt. Col. Peter DeTone, won the award for outstanding achievement from Oct. 1998 through July 1999.

The citation highlights their overall outstanding rating on last year's Air Mobility Command Operational Readiness Inspection, with outstanding ratings in all three categories of deployment, ability to survive and operate,



WELL DONE — Wing Commander Col. Martin M. Mazick congratulates outstanding unit commanders Col. Yash Malhatra, 439th MDS, Lt. Col. Peter DeTone, 58th APS, and Lt. Col. Talivaldis Meidelis, 439th CES. —photo by MSgt. W.C. Pope

and mission support. The unit was also applauded for earning the first-ever Total Team Award from Air Mobility Command's Inspector General.

The civil engineers, commanded by Lt. Col. Talivaldis Meidelis, earned their award

for outstanding service from Oct. 1997 through Sept. 1999. They were praised for maintaining their war readiness during the period despite demands like three overseas and four stateside deployments.

The Medical Squadron, led by Col. Yash Malhatra, earned kudos for exceptionally meritorious service from Oct. 1997 through Sept. 1999. Specifically, the award noted the unit's third consecutive "excellent" health services inspection rating in April 1998, a result of "sustained superior performance" throughout the 1990's.

Reactions from the commanders?

"A big shot in the arm!" says DeTone. "It really boosts morale," says Meidelis. And Malhatra, speaking of the men and women of his squadron: "They've deserved this for a long time."

Air Force identity, symbol in transition

WASHINGTON—As the Air Force continues its transition to the expeditionary aerospace force, it is focusing its identity to help with recruiting and retention in the new millennium.

As part of this effort, officials said they are working to establish a single, compelling theme and symbol to represent the Air Force to its members and the public.

"We want to ensure our core identity is part of our culture and is understood by our own people and the citizens we serve," said Gen. Michael E. Ryan, Air Force chief of staff. "As we enter the 21st century, our identity—who we are, what we do and what we believe—will represent both our heritage and our future.

"We know who we are and what we do," he said. "We want others to know, and we want them to support our Air Force."

Secretary of the Air Force Whit Peters said, "We know Air Force men and women take great pride in what they do. Our identity effort crystallizes what they're thinking. It will foster unity in the Air Force and help the American public understand the worthy work we do—from fighting the nation's wars to peacekeeping to humanitarian relief."

How is the Air Force determining how to express its identity? "By doing a lot of research," Col. Ron Rand, Air Force director of public affairs, explained.

With the help of a private corporate identity firm, Siegel & Gale, the Air Force spent the past year conducting research among the service and the public to capture the common elements of its identity that have great meaning to bind its people together.

The Air Force committed approximately \$150,000 to research internal and external audiences to determine current understanding and beliefs held about the Air Force, and approximately \$655,000 to hire Siegel & Gale to help interpret the research and ensure its identity is effectively communicated to Air Force members and potential recruits.

"Since last February, we've conducted seven surveys, held 68 focus groups and interviewed 13 retired four-star generals and 110 other people," Rand said. "We've taken input from about 10,000 people. Of this number, 7,500 were enlisted members, officers, and civilians in the active force, Air



U.S. AIR FORCE

"Artist's rendition of the proposed United States Air Force logo"

National Guard and Air Force Reserve. The other 2,500 were members of the general public."

This extensive research was used to find strengths and weaknesses in Air Force identity, Rand said. "We found that our people generally feel allegiance to the unit they belong to and to their job, more than they feel part of one big organization."

Research also showed that instead of one unifying theme, the Air Force has many different ways of expressing its identity, he said. In addition, there was little consistency in the visual representation of the Air Force.

"If you look at our base welcome signs, you don't get as much a sense of the Air Force as you do of the units behind the gates," Rand said. "The same applies to our aircraft, our newspapers and home pages, and even our uniforms.

"Unless you have really good eyes and can read the U.S. Air Force tape on someone's battle dress uniform, you may not know what service he or she represents," he said. "As for our aircraft, which are seen by millions of people, the tail markings tend to represent the wing and the command. You have to look pretty hard to see U.S. Air Force on our aircraft."

To overcome these inconsistencies, Siegel & Gale identified the four prevailing themes that emerged from the research: individual achievement, intelligence and technology, core values, and mission. They recommended the focus of the identity be the vital mission the Air Force performs around the world, because it was the theme that surfaced with the most passion throughout the research. The other three themes will support the mission focus, Rand said.

In characterizing the mission, Siegel & Gale concluded the Air Force is a world-

class, mission-ready organization. From this, they recommended the theme "World Ready." They also devised a symbol that captured both the heritage and future of the Air Force. These were presented to Air Force leaders in November. After much discussion, the secretary and chief of staff asked that more development work be done on both the theme and the symbol.

While theme alternatives are still in development, the proposed symbol updates the Hap Arnold wings and star with a more modern, angular design.

"Many people believe the Hap Arnold emblem is the official Air Force symbol, but it isn't," Rand said. "We don't have an official symbol, and never have had one. With the transition to the EAF and a new millennium, our leadership decided the timing is right to modernize our identity and give us an official symbol which will preserve the heritage of the Arnold wings."

During research, Air Force and public audiences saw various meanings in the new design.

"Most saw an eagle in flight and a medal of valor," he said. "Enlisted members saw their stripes and officers related to the star. Air Force people and civilians alike identified the new symbol with the Air Force's leading edge, aerospace mission.

Don't expect to see changes throughout the Air Force immediately, according to Rand. "There are no final decisions on any of this yet," he said. "We're still working through all the options on the development of the theme, the use of the symbol, and the implementation of both.

"There is no intent to repaint the fleet or change all our base signs overnight," Ryan said. "When we reach a final decision on our identity, we're going to try it on for awhile as we develop a plan to roll it out with minimal disruption and cost."

"We're trying to encapsulate the essence of what it means to be in the Air Force," Peters said. "The Air Force is a wonderful organization. It offers extraordinary opportunities beyond the monetary and the educational benefits that we have been using in recruiting.

"The Air Force is a fast-paced, fun, tough, and rewarding environment. It's about teamwork, patriotic service, and belonging to a world-class organization ready to respond anywhere in the world in a matter of hours. That's what we're trying to communicate. My hope is that this identity effort will do that." —Air Force Print News

Patriot People

Name: Tracy L. Kukawka
Rank: SSgt.
Age: 26
Address: Springfield, Mass.
Unit: 439th Airlift Wing
Position: Information Management
Civilian position: Biller
Favorite food: Chicken
Years of service: 5 1/2
Favorite sport: none
Favorite hobby: Reading
Ideal vacation: Tour of Europe
Best way to relax: Spending time with my family
Preferred entertainment: Bowling
Favorite hero: My son Kyle
Favorite music: Country
Favorite movie: *Little Princess*
Favorite aircraft: C-124
Pet peeve: "Rude people"
What I would do if I won \$1 million: Buy a new house and invest the rest



Photo by MSgt. W. C. Pope

SSgt. Tracy L. Kukawka

Patriot Praises

Promotions

SrA. Castillo, Scott F.
 SrA. Klein, Chad M.
 SrA. Lyman, Shawn P.
 SrA. Metzger, Melinda J.
 SrA. Rios, Juan F.
 SrA. Roberts, Marlene C.
 SrA. Sansone, Stephen R. J.
 SrA. Wilkinson, Joseph C.

Enlistments

SSgt. Felix, Roberto
 A1C Byam, Natasha A.
 A1C Johnson, Ryan C.
 A1C Porter, Steven C.
 AB Plummer, Elroy O.

Reenlistments

CMSgt. Missale, John M.
 MSgt. Giovannucci, Luciano
 MSgt. Irla, James T.
 MSgt. Laux, Arthur W.
 MSgt. McCauslin, Steven J.
 MSgt. Thorpe, Michael F.
 TSgt. Blake, Robert P.
 TSgt. Butler, Stephen P.
 TSgt. Casson, Jeffrey J.
 TSgt. Healy, Michael J.
 TSgt. Linton, Robert B.
 TSgt. Morales, Belitza
 TSgt. Robinson, Wayne A.
 TSgt. Smith, Blaine T.
 TSgt. Tocher, George B. D.
 TSgt. Viens, Ronald R.
 TSgt. Wright, Michael P.

SSgt. Barnes, James K., II
 SSgt. Koretsky, David S.
 SSgt. Longto, Dynelle M.
 SSgt. Niquette, Robert R.
 SSgt. Perry, David S.
 SSgt. Raymond, Albert R., III
 SSgt. Wilk, Thomas M.
 SSgt. Wolff, Paul E., Jr.
 SrA. Bogonovich, Neil W.
 SrA. Turner, Scott A.

Retirements

Lt. Col. Devine, Karlene A.
 Lt. Col. Guillet, Robert A.
 Lt. Col. Needles, Charles R.
 CMSgt. McShane, Thomas R.
 CMSgt. Troup, Howard D., Jr.
 SMSgt. Aiken, Jerrold J.
 MSgt. Albert, Robert G.
 MSgt. Ferreira, Kenneth P.
 MSgt. Holmes, Leslie C.
 MSgt. Matte, Richard J.
 MSgt. Merry, Victoria A.
 MSgt. Newell, Gordon A.
 MSgt. Pollier, Arthur J.
 MSgt. Southard, Walter F.
 TSgt. Chaniewicz-Adamchak, Halyna O.
 TSgt. Chaples, Byron T., Jr.
 TSgt. DeVane, Madeleine M.
 TSgt. Lemelin, Robert E.
 TSgt. MacLure, Joan E.
 TSgt. Michaud, Mary R.
 TSgt. Monopoli, Luke D.
 TSgt. Moynihan, Edward T.
 TSgt. Sauberlich, Erhardt W.
 TSgt. Yarnall, Carol A.

Awards and Decorations

Meritorious Service Medal

Lt. Col. Robert Guillet**	439 LG
Capt. Kathleen P. Reaves	439 AGS
SMSgt. Benedict B. Fiamma	439 AES
MSgt. Gordon A. Newell**	439 AW

Air Force Commendation Medal

Lt. Col. Peter E. Gray**	337 AS
Maj. Daniel W. Smith***	337 AS
Capt. Timothy S. Donnelly	439 SFS
Capt. Patricia A. Kuhner**	439 AES
1st Lt. David M. Capuano	337 AS
SMSgt. Robert W. Karrasch	337 AS
MSgt. Peter E. Jensen	439 OSS
MSgt. Michael J. Marrow	337 AS
MSgt. David F. Wilson **	337 AS
MSgt. Robert P. Morin	337 AS
TSgt. Laurie A. Carlson	439 LSS
TSgt. H. Chaniewicz-Adamchak	439 AGS
TSgt. Richard J. Charest	439 OG
TSgt. Nancy C. Clegg**	439 AES
TSgt. Christopher J. Hellyar	337 AS
TSgt. Robert E. Lemelin	439 AGS
TSgt. Kenneth MacDougald	337 AS
TSgt. Andrew J. Martindell	439 AGS
TSgt. Scott M. Pashko**	337 AS
TSgt. Mark A. Pleva***	337 AS
SSgt. Patrick M. Conway**	439 AES
SSgt. Christina Natale	439 AGS
SSgt. Bruce A. Yargeau	439 AGS
SrA. Edward Wilchinski, III	337 AS

Air Force Achievement Medal

TSgt. Timothy A. Day	439 AGS
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Second Award *Third Award

Enlisted Dining-out set for April

An enlisted dining-out is planned for Saturday, April 1, 2000 during the A UTA and will feature guest speaker CMSgt. Gary R. Akin, the director of the Air Force Enlisted Heritage Research Institute.

The event titled "Our Heritage, Our People, Our Pride" will begin at 6 p.m. for cocktails and dinner for 7 p.m. The cost will be \$20 for E-4 and below, \$25 for E-5 and E-6, and \$30 for E-7 and above.

The dress will be semi-formal or mess dress and will be held at the Westover ARB Consolidated Club.

Tickets can be obtained from the unit first sergeants.

Westover firefighters aid in river search for little girl

by SSgt. Charlie Cangemi

Nine Westover firefighters volunteered to join approximately 150 other professional and civilian rescue personnel to help find the body of a five-year-old girl who tumbled into the Housatonic River during a January snowstorm.

"One of the toughest things going in was we knew this was a body recovery and not a search and rescue mission," said firefighter Joe Kara, who has been involved in other searches for lost children.

After a 45-minute drive west to Great Barrington, Mass., firefighters Robert Fancy, Scott Kerry, Gary Kwasnik, Michael Patrick, Roger Caron, Arthur Herring, John Peters, Kenneth Lavigne, and Kara met other rescuers at a school gymnasium that state police turned into a staging area.

Led by state police Maj. Daniel Jamroz, the recovery team was made up of police officers, firefighters, emergency medical technicians, and civilians. Volunteers came from Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New York.

"It was one of the biggest searches I was ever involved in," said Kara. "It was a little overwhelming."

From the somber staging area, searchers received assignments. Some Westover firefighters headed out in below-freezing temperatures donned in "dry suits." They waded in the river, chopping ice, searching diligently for the young girl, yet wary of what they might find.

Other volunteers handled lines that were tethered to divers searching the river's bottom. The tethers prevented searchers from being swept by the swift current.

Divers manipulated cameras under several layers of ice to aid the search, firefighters said. The thick ice and slush, however, hampered efforts, resulting in a lengthy, six-day search. "It was like looking into a snow cone," said Jamroz, describing what the cameras recorded.

After a two to three hour shift, the volunteers returned to the staging area to get warm, rest, and eat food prepared by volunteers, before heading back into the cold.

At the end of the day, the firefighters said that although they felt good about helping with the recovery, they were also disappointed: "It was very frustrating because there wasn't much we could do," Herring said. "Not finding her was the toughest thing."

However, the outpouring of thanks from the community let them know that they were appreciated. "Lots of people thanked us as we left," Herring said.

At one point during the day the parents of the victim addressed the volunteers.

Said Herring, "The parents talked to all of us and said they were amazed at how many people came out to help — it was very emotional and lots of tears were shed."

The body of Shirley Palmer was found the next day close to where Westover firefighters searched.

Government travel VISA card mandatory March 1

WASHINGTON — Air Force financial officials are continuing to work with the Department of Defense on details regarding the use of a government Visa travel card for all federal employees.

Use of the government Visa travel card by all federal employees becomes mandatory March 1, according to revised policies dictated by the Travel and Transportation Re-

form Act of 1998. At that time, federal employees will no longer have a choice of using their personal credit charge cards for authorized expenses while on official travel.

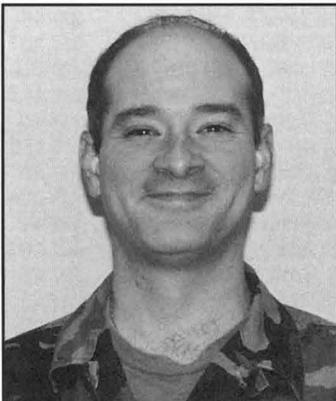
The government Visa card offers federal employees the advantage of wider acceptance from merchants and ATMs than the American Express card. In addition, it will reduce travel costs to the government through discounts and

rebates.

However, questions have been raised by military and civilian Air Force members and their commanders ranging from mandatory use of the card to privacy issues. Air Force finance officials said they are addressing each of these issues and will distribute guidance to the field before March 1. (AFNews Service).

PATRIOT

PATRIOT online: <http://www.afrc.af.mil/units/439aw/Default.htm>



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