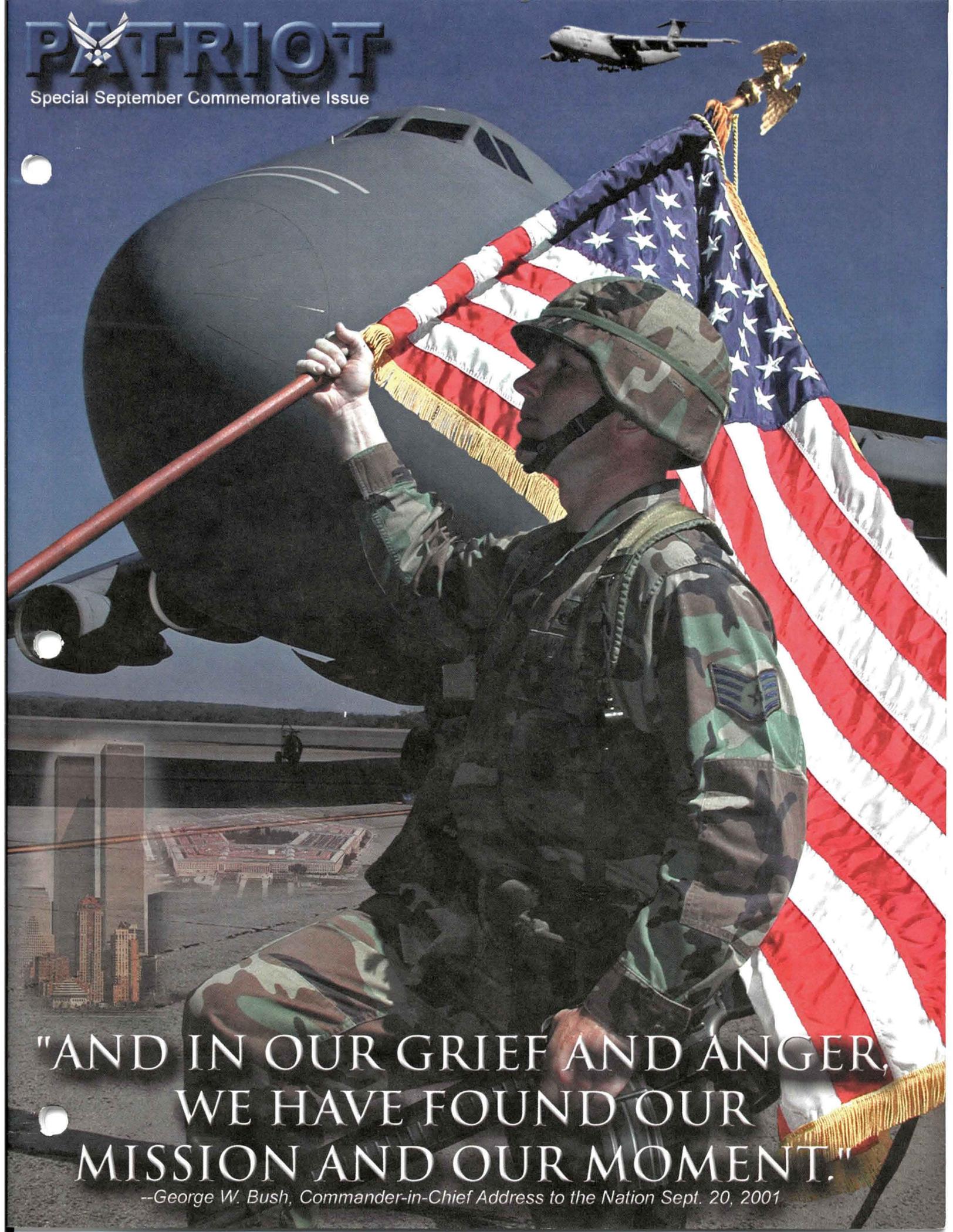


PATRIOT

Special September Commemorative Issue



"AND IN OUR GRIEF AND ANGER,
WE HAVE FOUND OUR
MISSION AND OUR MOMENT."

--George W. Bush, Commander-in-Chief Address to the Nation Sept. 20, 2001

'You are twice the citizen'

It's hard to believe a year has passed since the tragic attack on America. Remembrances will abound in the coming weeks, including our own at Westover on September 11. Many of you have spent almost a year on active duty. It is interesting to note that this was the largest mobilization of any unit in the reserve component, the second largest mobilization (1,300-plus people) for the 439th Airlift Wing; surpassed only by the Desert Shield/Storm mobilization. But unlike that time, this was a road show and you have represented Westover to the Air Force and the world in fine fashion.

When the call came, you responded. Whether you deployed or served here at home, you made America's response possible. The point was driven home to the nation and our Air Force that the mission cannot be accomplished without the reserve components. Today, no one questions your ability to do the mission! Everywhere you have gone, the kudos came back. Every location was sorry to see Westover people re-deploy home. Maintainers around the system know when a Westover C-5 comes through a location it will continue to move the mission — because of the job our maintainers do to keep 'em flying and aircrews that keep missions moving.

In talking with many of you, the story has been the same: you have endured long hours, worked extremely hard, applied innovation to get tasks accomplished, put up with family separations and felt very rewarded for having had the opportunity to serve. Once again we demonstrated that it takes the support of the heroes and heroines back home — our families — to make mission accomplishment possible.

Kudos to your employers! I have been able to talk with many and the theme is constant — some of their best employees are serving at Westover. It reminds me of a conversation I had with the Chicopee Chief of Police in late September 2001. He commented that if I mobilize my security forces he would lose some of his best people to active duty. My reply was simply, "Isn't it amazing Chief — some of your best people are some of my best people." It's true across the board in the words of Winston Churchill — "You are twice the citizen."

I believe your performance validates our training. We have worked hard to ensure that you were ready. I am proud of the fact that you were prepared to do your job and you did it safely! You deployed around the world, served in some of the harshest conditions, and with the entire population of Westover chipping in to meet our tasking, there was only one serious injury and that person is recovering well.

As you board the demobilization train let's keep in mind that about 180 airmen will remain on active duty to support our mission. The largest portion of this group will be made up of our security forces. Their continued presence is critical to the Air Force mission and they may stay for the entire two-year call-up authority. My special thanks for your continued sacrifice.

Your families, your employers, and you can be rightfully proud of your accomplishments. The bottom line: **YOU WERE THERE AND YOU WERE GREAT!**

by Col. Martin M. Mazick, 439th Airlift Wing Commander



Col. Martin M. Mazick

Briefs

MPF establishes demobilization website

The 439th Military Personnel Flight has created a website to help address questions reservists may have about demobilization. The address is: <https://www.westover.af.mil/orgs/sptg/mpf/demobilization/index.htm>

Family Forum set for September A UTA

Westover's Family Support Center will conduct a Family Forum Sept. 7 from 7:30-9:30 a.m. in the Westover Conference Center on Eagle Drive. Entitled, "Everything You Wanted to Know About Your Benefits and Entitlements as a Spouse of a Military Member," the event will feature a continental breakfast and activities for children.

Volunteers sought for veteran's stand-down

Medical volunteers are needed for the Western Massachusetts Veteran's Stand-Down scheduled for Sept. 28 at Westover. Anyone interested may contact Capt. Krista Bonner at (207) 839-9113 or e-mail at kbonner@maine.rr.com

Fourth quarter award recipients announced

Westover's Quarterly Awards Board has selected the following fourth quarter award winners for the fiscal 2002.

Airman:

SrA. Richard B. English, 439 AMDS

NCO:

TSgt. Paul E. Cyr, 439 SFS

Sr. NCO:

SMSGt. Frank Puopolo, 439 SFS

Officer:

1st Lt. Shawn Swarz, 439 SFS

Civilian:

David Dodge, 439 SFS

Civilian Supervisor:

Richard P. Fay, 439 SFS

October UTA schedule

A UTA Oct. 5-6

B UTA Oct. 19-20

Composite Image

SSgt. Chris Kellam, 439th Security Forces Squadron, represents the courage and resolve of the United States in the wake of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

— by MSgt. W.C. Pope

September 2002

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"The content is edited, prepared and provided by the Public Affairs Office of the 439th Airlift Wing, Westover Air Reserve Base. All photographs are Air Force photographs unless otherwise indicated."

439th AW Commander

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Chief of Public Affairs

/Co-editor

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TSgt. Andrew Reitano

SrA. Thomas Ouellette

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From Sept. 11 on, 439th answered nation's call

by Maj. Wilson Camelo

What began as a beautiful early fall morning turned into many people's worst nightmare when terrorists attacked the United States on September 11. That fateful day also turned into a call to action for the men and women of Westover.

It's safe to say when al-Qaeda operatives were planning the attacks they weren't thinking about how Westover would respond. And, respond they did as Westover answered the call from day one. On September 11, a C-5 flying on the first leg of trip to Australia was detoured to Travis AFB, Calif., to pick up a search and rescue team and bring them to the east coast to aid in the rescue effort.

As word of the attacks spread like wildfire, everyone scrambled to protect the base and its assets from any potential harm. Force Protection Delta, the highest security posture, was declared and Westover soon resembled a hardened fortress with security forces in full battle dress.

Most worked non-stop for several days and the base was inundated with calls from reservists volunteering to help. It wasn't just reservists calling to chip in, retirees sought ways to help out and were eventually manning ID check points at the entrances to all buildings. For the weeks that followed, the mood at the base revolved around tight security, people working long hours, and everyone wondering when and how the United States would respond.

In October, stop loss was initiated meaning retirements and separations were put on hold. Nearly everyone began to prepare for the possibility of being activated. That anticipation started to become a reality on October 1 when 41 439th Security Forces Squadron members were activated.

At its peak, more than 1,300 of the wing's 2,500 people were mobilized. Surpassed in numbers only by the activation for Desert Shield/Storm when about 1,550 people were activated, the activation for the war on terrorism took a team effort to make possible. Nearly every base organization chipped in as the in-processing mobility line in Base Hangar bustled with activity.

Once air strikes began in Afghanistan on October 18 and Operation Enduring Freedom was launched, it wasn't long until Westover's finest began deploying globally to support the OEF. Stateside, reservists were also supporting the homeland defense mission termed Operation Noble Eagle.

The first people summoned to forward locations across the Atlantic were 40 members of the 439th Maintenance Squadron in early November. From that point on Westover reservists began working hand-in-hand with their active duty and sister service counterparts to ensure the "beans and bullets" arrived in time to their intended worldwide strategic locations.

Despite the activations and the deployment of wing people to support missions abroad and stateside, Westover still had a full plate of responsibilities back home. There were requirements for airlift support for non-Enduring Freedom missions, exercises to

Continued on page 15

Officials offer thanks and praise

by Congressman Richard Neal, Second District

As we all know, the devastating events of September 11, 2001, have changed the United States forever. In the wake of this tragedy, our Armed Forces have been called upon to safeguard our freedom and fight the war against terrorism. A grateful nation thanks the brave men and women of the Air Force, Army, Navy and Marine Corps who protect and defend American interests at home and abroad.

Since 1940, Westover has played a significant role in the defense of our country. From World War II, to the current conflict in Afghanistan, the contribution of this key facility located in Chicopee, Massachusetts cannot be overstated. As the nation's largest Air Force Reserve base, responsible for worldwide air movement, Westover's importance will continue far into the future.

Following the September 11th attacks, the members of the 439th Airlift Wing have dedicated themselves to fighting global terrorism and enhancing homeland security. Under the capable leadership of Colonel Martin M. Mazick, they have distinguished themselves and their units during this unprecedented time in our nation's history. On behalf of the U.S. House of Representatives, I would like to express my deep appreciation to every member of the 439th Airlift Wing. May God Bless you and the United States of America.

by Jane Swift, Acting Governor, State of Massachusetts

As a nation we take strength in the knowledge that we remain the world's beacon of liberty. It is the commitment that you have made to our country that allows us to continue to enjoy this freedom. The courageous efforts and the selfless acts of heroism displayed by the members of the 439th Airlift Wing serve as an inspiration to us all.

I speak for our Commonwealth, and for our nation, in thanking you for your service and dedication. You are entrusted with guaranteeing that our communities are secure, and the integrity that you bring to this awesome task is most commendable. Your perseverance proves that cowardly acts of terrorism are no match for the resolve of the American people.

by Richard Kos, Mayor of Chicopee

As we look back over the past year since the tragic events of Sept. 11th, our nation finds that it has much for which to be proud. The compassion shown by the American people for the victims of the attacks and their families, the determination at every level of government to adapt and be better prepared for the new challenges that lie before us, and the bravery and sacrifice demonstrated by the men and women of our armed forces both here and abroad, are shining examples of our capabilities.

Here in the city of Chicopee, we take tremendous pride in the fact that our community hosts the 439th AW at Westover Air Reserve Base. When our president launched Operation Enduring Freedom, the citizens of this city were honored to learn that many of their own were to join this nation's fight against terrorism. Indeed, the activation and deployment of more than 1,300 reservists from Westover ARB was met with overwhelming support from families, employers, and the general public both in this community and throughout Western Massachusetts.

The men and women of the 439th AW, deserve our greatest respect and praise. On behalf of a grateful public, I thank and congratulate you all for a job well done.

Sept. 11: hijacked airliners crash into WTC Towers, Pentagon, Pennsylvania field

Sept 24: first three Westover Reservists from the 439th Security Forces Squadron are activated for Operation Enduring Freedom

September 2001

Sept 11: Westover C-5 at Travis AFB delivers rescue team and equipment to East Coast

Sept 30: forty-one reservists from 439th Security Forces Squadron activated to heighten base security

Westover reservists recall

by **SSgt. Thamara JeanLouis**
439th Aerospace Medicine Squadron

On Sept. 11, 2001, I was flying on American Airlines from Logan Airport in Boston on a business trip to Las Vegas with 20 co-workers. For some reason, I was apprehensive about being on the plane for such a long time. After parking my car I went to the gate and socialized with some people at a nearby gate while waiting for my flight to board. Those people were on American Airlines Flight 11, the first plane to hit the World Trade Center.



We boarded at about the same time and I remember telling the group to have a safe flight. Midway through the flight, the pilot announced, "Ladies and gentlemen, it appears that a plane has hit one of the twin towers in New York." I will never forget this announcement. There was pure silence, and soon people began wondering how a plane could collide into the building. Then, two passengers – including a co-worker – started getting frantic since one of them had a father who worked at the WTC.

Soon, another announcement was made. "A second plane has just crashed into the second tower and a third plane appears to be headed to the Pentagon and has diverted." My mouth dropped and my heart raced at 100 miles per hour. I knew it was a terrorist attack. I immediately began looking around the plane to see if anyone looked suspicious. Everyone was frantic, people were crying and some took out their cell phones but all the circuits were busy.

The pilot announced he had to immediately land. He attempted three times, but it was like the sky was raining planes. We finally got clearance from the Kansas City airport and landed.

I tried to call home but could not get through because the pay phone lines were miles long. I finally got through to my family after five hours. They were glad to hear my voice because they thought it was my flight since they didn't have my flight number and only knew I was on an American Airlines flight.

I soon realized how blessed I was to still be alive because the flight numbers of the planes that crashed were announced and I could not believe that it was the group of people I was just talking to in Boston. It then hit me, and I became very emotional and could not bear the thought

of how quickly you can lose your life.

The airline would not release our bags and told us we were on our own. We tried obtaining rental cars and hotel rooms but none were available. It felt like the end of the world as I was standing in this airport and people were running around trying to get home. By nightfall, we found some rooms and crashed for the night.

We were stranded for two days until the company chartered a bus to take us home. The bus ride took 45 hours. When I finally got home Saturday morning I was mentally brain dead. On top of everything, my car was parked near where the hijackers parked, so the FBI impounded all of the cars at that terminal including mine. My mother said she received a phone call from the feds asking about me and the contents in my car.

The whole experience was a disaster but nothing compared to the loss of life. I still think about those people from Flight 11 – remembering their faces and praying that their families are doing all right.

I have flown since the tragedy but on every flight I go on, I always get scared when the pilot begins to make an announcement. It just brings me back to that dreadful day.

by **Amn. Leanne Sambrook**
439th Airlift Wing

Sept. 11 was a miserable day for everyone and also memorable for us as this terrible day was also our enlistment day. We were here signing the last bit of paperwork when a sergeant came in the room and announced the news of the first jet hitting the towers. My sister and I thought he was joking because we were about to board a commercial flight to Lackland AFB. We all gathered in front of a TV and watched in horror as the other jet exploded into the second tower. Stunned, we realized these plane crashes were no accident and our lives would change forever.



To our surprise, our in-process procedure continued. We tried to pay attention to SMSgt. Beverly Cote, who remained professional and cool as a cucumber, but we knew then that boot camp would be no picnic. She was sincere and helpful in keeping us positive and calm but our hearts were definitely hammering in our chests. We just wanted to go home.

We witnessed security as it reached Force Protection Delta and the base was closed. Perhaps the biggest decision of our lives was swimming in our minds of these future airmen: should we stay or should we go? What were we getting ourselves into? How long would we be gone? What in the world (literally) was happening? We knew that legally we still had a choice, but I'm proud that neither of us really considered that option. We willingly boarded our plane to Lackland.

by **SMSgt. Michael Grady**
439th Security Forces Squadron

Sept. 11 was my son's first day of preschool and it was a clear, beautiful morning. After returning home from dropping him off, I turned on the TV and saw the smoke pouring out of the World Trade Center. After witnessing the sec-

ond plane strike the other tower, I had a gut feeling I would soon be activated. The immediate fallout affected my civilian job with the Massachusetts Environmental Police. I was assigned to a district near Boston and found out later that day that a fellow police officer, Sgt Mike Sweeney, lost his wife, Amy, who was a flight attendant on one of the aircraft. During the

following two weeks, I patrolled Boston Harbor assisting the U.S. Coast Guard, who was on high alert for potential terrorist attacks. Boston Harbor was virtually shutdown and it was surreal to see the skies patrolled by fighter jets from Otis Air National Guard Base and not a single commercial plane arriving or leaving Boston.

Oct. 17-18: total base reservists activated reaches 903 for Operation Enduring Freedom

Oct. 26: Mass. Sen. Edward Kennedy, Congressman Richard Neal, and Chicopee Mayor Richard Kos come to thank Westover's personnel for their participation in the War

October 2001

Oct. 23: Col. Dana Marsh takes command of the 439th Support Group

Where they were on Sept. 11

by TSgt. Robert Sinclair 439th Aircraft Generation Squadron

I reside in Queens, N.Y., and work on 33rd and Park Avenue in midtown. I arrived in the city around 9:30 a.m., shortly after the second plane struck Tower Two. As I was making my way, I noticed crowds of people in the streets and on the corners. For us New Yorkers, this is the norm, so I paid the crowd little attention. I stopped at a corner store for breakfast and the radio station was giving reports of a plane hitting one of the Twin Towers. As I crossed Fifth Avenue I could see the towers burning, but again, this is New York, and the craziest things happen here, so I pressed on as if somehow this was normal.

When I arrived at my office I learned that this was a terrorist attack. By now, all landmarks and skyscrapers were being evacuated. The vision of people running for safety – God knows where because the subway, bridges and tunnels were closed – made me feel like I was watching a TV report of some tragic event taking place in a foreign country. In the midst of the chaos, I became concerned about a friend who was working on the 102nd floor of Tower Two. I ran downstairs with hopes that I would see her amongst the thousands who fled Lower Manhattan on foot, escaping the soot and debris from the burning towers. Later, I learned she was missing and until this day



her remains were never found.

The foot traffic—or should I say the flight to safety—was now picking up pace. I recall women walking barefoot and carrying their purses and shoes in hand. Many made it to midtown and passed out on the sidewalks from exhaustion and fatigue. Soon a strange smell was permeating throughout the city and people began coughing and covering their faces. There were cops, FBI agents, and fire trucks everywhere. If terrorists had dropped dirty bombs or opened fire from above in midtown, they could have easily wiped all of us out. The thought of dying flashed in and out my mind as I tried calling my family to check on them and let them know that, for the moment, I was okay.

I arrived home in Queens around 8 p.m., after the longest commute I ever had. However, the elongated commute didn't matter. I was just thankful that I returned home because many who left their house that morning did not. I hugged and kissed my daughter and cried as I held her close to my chest.

After hearing the President's speech days later on how the U.S. would punish those responsible, I knew it would be just a matter of time before I would get the call to duty.

I often think of the passengers on United Flight 93 and how they made a concerted decision to combat the terrorists to prevent further casualties. Those resonating words, "Let's Roll!", make my adrenaline flow. I am sure those passengers are posthumously basking in glory and are proud of all of us here at Westover for keeping their spirits alive.

by SSgt. Robert Beadle 439th Mission Support Squadron

When I was activated on December 26, 2001, I was in the middle of my senior year of college at the University of Massachusetts - Amherst. The phone call came to me only hours after submitting my last paper for the fall semester. I had just finished the most stressful semester of my college career and now I was faced with yet another life changing event.

While I had to cancel my classes for the spring semester, I was still determined to

graduate on time. So, I began to take night classes - a schedule that would consume nearly every evening of the week. Before the activation, I also had plans to attend graduate school, and while activated I applied to six graduate schools.

A full time job with the Air Force coupled with 12 credits of night school, 6 applications to grad school and the active UTA schedules certainly kept me busy. However, when May rolled around, I had graduated with a B.A. in Communications and a minor in Political Science, discovered that my credits made me eligible for a CCAF Associates degree in Human

Resource Management, and I was admitted to five graduate schools. Fortunately, these schools gave me permission to defer enrollment for next year in light of my service. Yet, as difficult as my civilian life had become, I never lost sight of our Air Force mission.



by MSgt. Mary Ferriter 439th Logistics Support Squadron

I was teaching at Tudor Hill School in Chelsea, Mass., a small alternative public school located two miles from Logan Airport, on Sept. 11. We were instructed not to let our students know what was going on, but they soon learned of the tragic events on their own. They and we were all in shock. All day we could see and hear military aircraft patrolling Boston. Both staff and students knew I was a reservist and looked to me for information asking about they types of planes they were flying, if we were at war and if we were safe. The most I could do was keep the staff and students calm and assure them that if any military action was taken, we



had the best military in the world.

September 11 became very personal for our school in the weeks that followed. I was scheduled to retire from the reserves in October, but could sense the impending activation. With only seven teachers on staff, many of whom are new, for grades five through twelve I was the "old" experienced teacher looked to for advice and encouragement.

On October 17, I learned I would be activated for one year. I had to tell my students that I was leaving. Many of them had been with me for three years and were very attached. It was very emotional for all of us. It was very difficult keeping my emotions in check, especially when one student raised his hand and said, "my teacher is a hero, now we know a hero." The day after I left, one student tried to jump out a window.

Since being activated I've continued to keep in touch with staff and students, visiting when possible on my days off. I'm going to try to retire again in September and hope to be back at school on Sept 29.

Nov. 1: seven command post controllers activated

Nov.: members of the 439th Logistics Group are sent to Moron AB, Spain to support C-5s involved in Operation Enduring Freedom

Nov. 28: nineteen members of the 439th Aerospace Medicine Squadron activated

November 2001

Nov. 15-18: 439th Aeromedical Staging Squadron has 22nd Air Force Staff Assistance Visit

Nov. 23: nine members of the 439th Services Squadron activated

(October 2001) Attack on America: Westover's initial response

A Westover aircrew was in the air with help within hours of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks in New York and Washington. The aircrew, under aircraft commander Maj. Daniel Smith, was at Travis AFB, Calif. on the first leg of a mission to Australia when they were tasked to transport a rescue team and equipment to the East Coast. They loaded their Galaxy and departed Travis by 6:30 p.m., Sept. 11. (PST).

(October 2001) Attack on America: Westover responds

Like the Pearl Harbor generation, we will always know where we were when America came under fire. We'll remember hearing the first word as we went about our business at mid-morning on a Tuesday, Sept. 11. We'll never forget standing around TV sets watching the world unravel. Like the Pearl Harbor generation, we will have the satisfaction of knowing that those who hurt us, misjudged us. Even as the blows were still coming, we fell back on instinct and training.



(October 2001) Total Force responds to increased security needs

Around-the-clock force protection is hard work at any time. During the current crisis, stepped up patrols within the base, expanded security teams at the gate, tighter scrutiny of the fence line, the posting of new entry control points and myriad other new security measures requires extra help.

When Westover went to Force Protection Condition Delta in the days immediately following the Sept. 11 terror attacks, the Army, Marines, Navy and area police closed ranks with the 439th Security Forces Squadron and Westover DoD police.

(October 2001) Politicians thank activated reservists for service

Senator Edward M. Kennedy, Congressman Richard Neal and Chicopee Mayor Richard Kos came to Westover to express appreciation and pledge support for recently activated reservists on Oct. 26. Senator Kennedy noted that the Bay State might be activating more military members than any state in the union. "We know that all of you at Westover are doing all you can to guarantee that America is safe and secure, and we're forever in your debt," Kennedy said.

(Nov. 2001) 41 security forces reservists are first to get the call

Westover called its first reservists to active duty Oct. 1, when 41 members of the 439th Security Forces Squadron were brought on board to help guard the base against possible terrorist attack.

"I realize the imposition we are putting on your lives," said Col. Martin M. Mazick, commander of the 439th Airlift Wing, "but we really need your help."

(Nov. 2001) Nearly 1,000 base reservists activated

On Oct. 18, the day the Pentagon reported the first fighting by American ground troops in Afghanistan, Westover announced the activation of 903 reservists, including aircrews and maintenance members. Mobility lines were set up in the Base Hangar, a real-world setting not seen since the Desert Shield activation of aircrews and maintenance reservists.

As activated reservists wended their way from station to station along two rows of tables, newspaper, radio and TV reporters shadowed their every step, telling audiences that Westover's men and women were leaving their civilian jobs and revamping their family lives.

(Nov. 2001) Two former wing members serve FEMA in NYC

Experiencing the shock, pain and anger after the attack on America, the nation had the consolation of witnessing a coordinated, effective emergency rescue effort. Two former Westover members were among the first emergency preparedness FEMA liaison officers to respond to the terrorist attack. Lt. Col. Timothy Olmstead and Col. Glen Martin were close to Ground Zero during the first physically and emotionally draining days.

(Dec. 2001) Med tech joins triage at Ground Zero

New York City went from technicolor to gray on Sept. 11. That's one of the recollections MSgt. Albert Lefave has of that day. The veteran Westover med tech watched in horror as planes smashed into the twin towers. He jumped into an ambulance at the scene and traveled in and out of the thick bank of smoke to search for fallen firefighters.



(Jan. 2002) Chaplain Miesel ministers to Conn. anthrax victims

Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Richard Miesel was recently thrust into the spotlight of the anthrax terrorist attacks when he had the difficult duty of ministering to a member of his Connecticut parish who fell victim.

The nationwide string of anthrax attacks took on a personal meaning for the wing Protestant chaplain when a 94-year-old woman parishioner of his Immanuel Lutheran Church, Oxford, Conn., was stricken in late November.

(Feb. 2002) Jubilant families greet returning reservists

Flags and red, white and blue balloons wave in the frigid breeze as family members pressed against the chain-link fence when the C-5 rolled onto Westover's tarmac on Jan. 5. Cheers soon erupted as 37 maintenance reservists walked off the plane, returning from a 60-day deployment that spanned the holidays.

For SSgt. Michael's* children, their best belated Christmas gift was having their daddy home. "I missed playing football with him," said four-year-old Zachary. Michael said that Christmas Eve was the hardest time of his deployment.



During December: 40 members of the 439th Maintenance Squadron deploy to Moron AB, Spain on a three-month tour supporting C-5s in Operation Enduring Freedom

Dec. 17: two members of the 722nd Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron activated

Dec 26: eleven members of the 439th Support Squadron activated

December 2001

(March, 2002) Westover plays its part in Enduring Freedom

Operation Enduring Freedom is rolling because Westover men and women, those activated and volunteers, are in place worldwide moving cargo, maintaining aircraft, flying and performing other support missions from finance to intelligence. An aircrew under aircraft commander Lt. Col. Sandy Whittier, flew missions to two locations where they met aerial porters and intelligence specialists who are among Westover's overseas Enduring Freedom teams.

(April 2002) More activations, more than 1,150 to war effort

Forty-two reservists from three different squadrons were the latest of the men and women from Westover to be activated in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. The reservists called up on Feb. 22 included those of the 439th Civil Engineering Squadron, 439th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron, 439th Aerospace Medicine Squadron and the 439th Security Forces Squadron.

(February 2002) EOD flight activates to respond to incidents

The seven members of the 439th Explosive Ordnance Disposal Flight became one of the latest units to be activated at Westover. The flight is on standby 24 hours a day, 7 days per week to respond to any explosive-related emergency.

(February 2002) Back to school

Fourteen members from Westover's maintenance squadrons visited five area schools in February to thank classes for their cards and letters during a recent deployment – and to bring them return letters. Artwork from the students was brought back from overseas and now hangs near the Hangar 9 break room.



(March 2002) 439th unveils "Let's Roll!" nose art at C-5 hangar ceremony

Local congressmen, Air Force Reserve leadership and a crowd of Westover reservists gathered with a C-5 in the pull-through hangar on March 15 for the unveiling of the "Let's Roll!" nose art.

"The nose art is going to represent the spirit of 9/11," said Maj. Gen. James Bankers, 22nd Air Force commander. "The spirit of 9/11 is one of solidarity... it's also a warrior's call," he said.

(May 2002) Westover teams maintain C-5 support overseas

Local media representatives were on board a Westover C-5 mission to swap out maintenance deployment Enduring Freedom teams overseas. The maintenance mission is to support all C-5s transiting through the air base and to help with any other aircraft as needed. The four C-5s on the ground provided instant work for the incoming crews, including an engine change.

(May 2002) Families, local band greet returning troops



While the comings and goings of men and women of the 439th Airlift Wing have become common at Westover, 40 reservists returned from overseas duty to musical fanfare. As airmen stepped off the C-5 to frantic waves from their family members, they heard more than just cheers. The eighth-grade band from the Chestnut Hill Community School in Belchertown provided about an hour of popular and patriot music for the occasion. Another group of maintainers headed overseas on May 28 for a 90-day tour.

(June 2002) Far, far and way

Among the more than 1,200 Westover reservists activated, many were serving tough, hazardous duty at bare overseas bases. Capt. Shawn with the 439th ASTS worked a C-17 medical mission. Westover security forces were guarding forward deployed bases. Maintainers were working overtime to keep up the high operations tempo around the world.

(July 2002) 58th Aerial Port Squadron – serving in the sand

Sixty members of the 58th Aerial Port Squadron now better understand what a short-notice tasking and deployment really means after experiencing it first-hand. For a select 24, it meant a span of 48 hours from mobilization to deployment.

Three months into their rotation, reservists from the 58th APS were serving in five different overseas locations supporting Operation Enduring Freedom as part of the 379th Air Expedition Wing.

(Aug. 2002) Selected demobilization begins

Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. John P. Jumper announced a planned demobilization of reserve component forces. However, how his announcement will affect reservists remains unclear.

(Aug. 2002) Two 439th reservists help to make Bagram AB operational

TSgt. Laurie Willabay and SSgt. Dawn Rivet returned home after 90 days duty as airfield managers at Bagram AB, Afghanistan.

"The living conditions weren't spectacular, and the work days were long and strenuous, but both of us see our time at Bagram as a learning experience," Rivet said.

(Aug. 2002) Around the world on many missions

Members of the 42nd Aerial Port Squadron deployed to Southwest Asia claimed a "first" when they helped deploy Romanian troops into Afghanistan. Forty members of the 439th CES, including firefighters, deployed to a Southwest Asia location where training included working in chemical warfare suits. The enterprising civil engineers kept up appearances by opening up their own barbershop.

JUST DESERTS — Westover reservists take the heat in the war on terrorism when deployed to desert location. At right, the mercury maxes out at 120 degrees.

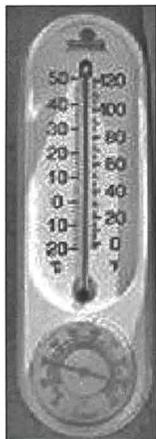
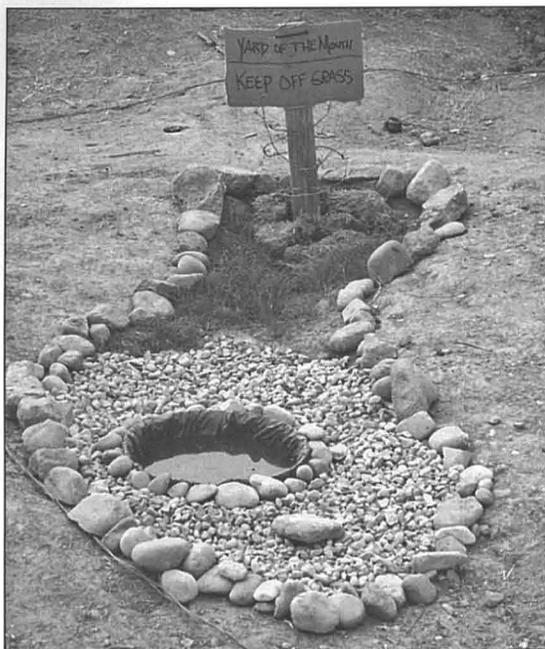


photo by TSgt. Robert Cirillo



ON THE ROAD—Right, TSgt. Joaquim Pedro, an aircraft maintenance craftsman, is interviewed by Channel 22 reporter Ellen Cheng during a media flight to an undisclosed location in Europe; SSgt. Andre Theriault, 439th MXS maintainer, awaits an aircraft at Rhein-Main AB, Germany.



photo by SMSgt. Sandi Michon

Feb. 4: thirty Reservists are activated including chaplain, legal office, plans, 439th Communications Squadron, 42nd Aerial Port Squadron

Feb. 5: five from the 439th Explosive Ordnance Disposal flight activated

Total activated 1,150

February 2002

Feb. 22: sixty reservists activated. Including firefighters from the 439th Civil Engineering Squadron, 439th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron, 439th Aerospace Medicine Squadron, and the 439th Security Forces Squadron

ace like home



photo courtesy of Maj. Tim Donnelly



CREATURE COMFORTS—Caravans of Kuchi tribes in Afghanistan migrate on dusty roads as they seek seasonal grasses to feed their sheep in the above photo, while reservists deployed to Uzbekistan navigate through muddy streets in tent city in the photo at left.

Mar. 8: sixty members of the 58th Aerial Port Squadron and 439th Aeromedical Staging Squadron activated

Mar. 15: the 439th Airlift Wing unveils the "Let's Roll!" nose art on a C-5 in the pull-through hangar

March 2002

Mar. 26: another 40 members of the 439th Maintenance Squadron deploy to Moron AB, Spain, for a three-month tour to support C-5s involved in Operation Enduring Freedom

Six-month Southwest Asia tour wraps up for Donnelly

by Lt. Col. Sally Nutt Morger
Photos courtesy of Maj. Tim Donnelly

No combat. That's what Maj. Tim Donnelly told his daughter last November when he got his activation notice. The ten-year-old girl fearfully envisioned Daddy going off to war, toting a gun and fighting the bad guys. That's the Army and the special ops guys, he explained to alleviate her fear. I won't be on the front line.

His daughter's vision turned out to be closer to the truth.

Six months later, the 39-year-old traditional Air Force reservist found himself in Afghanistan, by day scrutinizing barren landscapes from the open door of a Blackhawk helicopter flying nap-of-the-earth with Apache escorts, and by night hugging his rifle with his pistol under his rolled clothing while sleeping

in a tent.

Like many reservists, Donnelly's deployment originated on Sept. 11. On a weekday morning like any other, the Massachusetts state trooper was on the job in Boston where he's assigned to the state attorney general's office. Unlike many others, on hearing that a plane had flown into the World Trade Center, Donnelly didn't think it was a small plane gone astray. "I immediately DID think it was a terrorist," he says. By 10 a.m., he and his fellow investigators were speeding toward Logan Airport.

Donnelly was assigned to pair up with a FBI agent, together following leads for the agency's Twin Towers Task Force. "The level of work the task force did was incredible," says Donnelly. "It was amazing to see the information uncovered that first week. It shows what can happen when everyone works together."

Because of the importance of his civilian work, Donnelly was excused from his October UTA by his unit, the 439th AW Security Forces Squadron. He was at home on some rare time off, carrying out the trash, when his squadron called with orders to report for the mobility line on Nov. 5. Even then, he expected to stay stateside at Westover where security cops were working 12-hour shifts in force protection. "I expected it to be like my activation during Desert Storm," he says.

But the Air Force planned differently. On Jan. 6, he flew commercial to U.S. Central Command's Joint Security Directorate (Forward) in the Middle East. He became a team chief assessing the vulnerability of embassies, American schools and DoD institutions around Africa and central and southwest Asia. His teams, tailored to each situation, might include Navy SEALs and surface war-

Nice place to visit, but ...



FAR, FAR AWAY — SSgt. Shawn*, a Westover command post technician, describes his deployment location as "a place I want to forget when I get back." Ordnance people are exploding land mines and tracer fire lights the evening sky. There are blown-up buildings, bullet holes in the offices, the heat hovers around 100 and dust storms are a daily event. While working guard duty in July, a local man came to the entry gate with a two-year-old in his arms. The child's mother had shielded the bloodied child from the worst of the land mine. Shawn was deployed the day before his eighth wedding anniversary, and is away from his four young children. It looks like his deployment will be extended to 120 days.

*Air Force security guidelines prohibit the use of deployed members' last names

April 8: members of the 439th Communications Squadron and the 439th Airlift Wing are activated, bringing the total number of Westover reservists to 1,282 - more than any other AFRC unit in the Air Force

April 30 - May 5: Inspectors from Headquarters AFRC visit Westover for the 439th Airlift Wing's Unit Compliance Inspection

get down and dirty

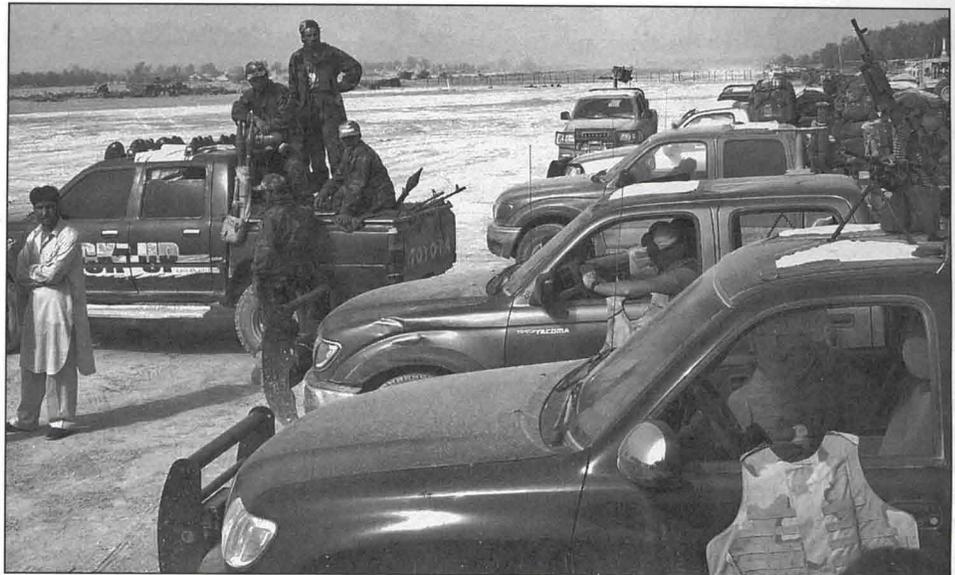
fare officers, Army Green Berets, Rangers and military police, explosive ordinance and biochemical experts, or Air Force security police like himself.

"I would pack a suit and tie for embassy work, jeans and T-shirt for other sites. Some places, I kept my weapons close." Donnelly says the threat of spies was a bit James Bond-ish.

Donnelly was scheduled to travel throughout CENTCOM, an area of 25 economically and culturally diverse countries. His travelogue included Pakistan, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman, and the United Arab Emirates. Turkmenistan proved one of the most interesting. "Because it's a dictatorship, it was the only country where I entered at the invitation of the Turkmenistan president," he says. "Its capital, Ashkabat, is called the Las Vegas of central Asia. It was a very colorful place."

His tour of the command got cut short when in late April he was sent into Afghanistan on a rotation of a vulnerability assessment team. He flew into Bagram Air Base, with his partner, a Green Beret. Together they traveled the country, but within a week their objective changed. After staying a few days at a special ops compound - "...where they were running at 120 percent..." - Donnelly and his partner were asked to put together quick reaction force briefing packages for fire bases around Afghanistan. These packages, used by special ops combat teams, required potentially dangerous reconnaissance work. That's when the Blackhawk rides began.

"We'd be screaming along at low altitude with the door open, the wind so strong my cheeks pushed in," says Donnelly. "The Apache helicopters would be flying cover alongside us as we flew over caves, and anti-aircraft emplacements. The danger was exciting. But I'd think about my daughter, and that if anything happened to me, she'd think I'd lied to her."



WAR ZONE – Above, Afghan and American forces join together for a mission. Note the armored vest straddled aside the truck cab, affording extra protection for the driver. Below left, Donnelly's view from a Blackhawk helicopter often meant barren landscapes and other chopper escorts.

Donnelly draws many parallels between his civilian police work and his recent experience with special ops forces. He says that the general public may perceive both groups as tough and macho, when in fact, if they were only that, they wouldn't stay alive. Indeed, Special Operations Command Central touts its troops as being culturally sensitive, instrumental for their mission of building trust and influence within a region. Donnelly says operations in Afghanistan reminded him of community police programs like the Weed and Seed program. "You clean up problems, then build up."

"I believe only about three percent of people cause problems. Most people just want safety... and to be able to feed their kids. It's true in Massachusetts and it's true in Afghanistan."

Over the course of his two months in the country, Donnelly noticed changes. "I went into Kabul quite a lot. It was good seeing how much freer people were becoming, boys playing soccer, kids doing the things kids do." But there always seemed to be the sobering, underlying threat of the Taliban coming back, who during this time attacked and killed one girl and maimed another for removing their burkas in public.

Other visual memories? Torture rooms. Unexploded minefields off the sides of public roads. And the level of poverty.

"What we consider trash was treasure to them. They would pick through our garbage,

take it and reuse it." In fact, trash became a security issue at Bagram AB when Afghans kept venturing onto the facility to pick the garbage. Americans devised an agreement whereby they now separate their "valuable" garbage - like plywood and cardboard - then place it outside the gates, available to the local public. "It made me embarrassed, to think what we waste."

By the end of his tour, Donnelly looked a little different. His hair curled a bit on his neck, and he sported a moustache and a beard. "Afghani men aren't considered real men unless they have facial hair," he explains.

Donnelly kept in touch with his family back home by computer at select locations around Afghanistan. "My wife was very frustrated," he says, "because I couldn't tell her where I was."

Donnelly's Afghan tour ended late in June, when he flew back to his headquarters element, then headed for Boston. His wife and daughter were waiting for him at the airport gate. "My daughter launched at me from five feet away, then attached herself to me like a barnacle. It was then that I realized what it was like for her."

Editor's note: As of press time, most 439th AW activated reservists are slated for demobilization. However, those in the security forces may remain on active duty for up to two years. It's probable that Donnelly will be one of those long-serving reservists.

May 2-5: the 439th Aerospace Medicine Squadron aced a Health Services Inspection

May 16-17: the 439th Aeromedical Staging Squadron aced its Health Services Inspection

May 17-19: the annual tri-service Team Yankee exercise held in Dogpatch

May 21: six members of the 439th Services Squadron are activated

May 2002

May 13: the 337th Airlift Squadron and the 439th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron underwent the Aircrew Standardization Evacuation visit

May 30: forty Maintenance personnel returned from overseas to a welcoming crowd while the Chestnut Hill Community School Band from Belchertown performed

by SMSgt. Sandi Michon

Commenting on her nine months activation, MSgt. Mindy Wheeler Pettit joked that it has birthed a whole new perspective on life.

The pregnancy analogy is appropriate in that activation has involved both pain and joy for many reservists, but skewed in that labor pains marked the onset rather than just the end.

Pettit had just married and moved into a new home in Connecticut when she was called to active duty in October. Her temporary home was now a hotel room and she balanced fulltime work at the command post with part-time, fill-in at her civilian job on her days off. "You really learn to maximize your time with so many demands," said Wheeler.

The pain of activation has taken many forms. Reservists with their own businesses have seen some fail in their absence. Students put their education on hold and even political activities were curtailed. MSgt. Shane Robitaille, 439th MPF superintendent, had to resign from all partisan political activities and positions when he was called to active duty in December. He also declined a bid for a state representative seat in Massachusetts. "I don't know anyone that is activated who doesn't feel that they are doing something for their country that is bigger than themselves or their own personal interests," commented Robitaille on his change of plans.

Countless birthdays, anniversaries, and other family milestones are missed during the long months of military service.

Many parents missed those celebrated "firsts" with their young children. TSgt. Sandra Mundt was activated on Dec.



Robitaille

26, the day after Christmas and also the day after the first birthday of her twin girls. "At first, it wasn't too bad," she said, even though she felt she missed significant changes. "One day I would see them take shaky steps and the next week they would be running," said Mundt, who also has a six-year-old son.

When Mundt's husband fell off their roof and broke his foot in February, and Mundt's father suffered a heart attack in March, the strain of activation began to wear thin. "By April, I was really frustrated. I just wanted to be with my family," she said, after seeing her family only on weekends as her visits home alternated with her husband's visits to the base with the kids.

Even though Mundt's husband was retired Air Force, and they had moved most of their adult lives, in May, the couple decided to sell their home in South Weymouth, Mass. and buy a home closer to the base. "I want to make the Air Force my career, so it made sense to make decisions for the long haul," she said.

Other moves brought families even further away. TSgt. Lee Trickett, with the 439th LSS, has seen his three daughters twice since being activated Oct. 17. As a single dad, he had just relocated to Florida so his parents could help with day care when he received the call. He has visited them twice since October.

"He said getting leave to visit his girls in Florida was the best Christmas present he could get," said his commander, Lt. Col. Patricia Hale, who also knows, in a lesser way, what it's like to miss daughters. On Sept. 11, Hale saw the writing on the wall, and by her activation on Oct. 17, all was in place for her two daughters. A blend of relatives and daycare provider filled in, but she said it was tough at first. "My daughters (ages 4 and 5) wouldn't talk to me when I came home after first leaving - they were mad - but they are over that now," she said. "Now they just ask when can I come home to stay."

That's a question MSgt. Nelson's* daughters will probably ask when he returns from a European deployment spanning the summer. He keeps in touch with his family through phone calls and e-mails. His wife recently told him that their two-year-old daughter showed her one-year-old sister a picture of Nelson, and she said, "Baby, it's Dadda." While deployed, Nelson helped give a C-5 tour to children who had lost one or both parents in the World Trade Center attacks. "It was a real eye-opener looking into their faces - watching them enjoy the tour - while knowing in the back of your mind that you are grateful it wasn't any of your own family members killed in the attack," Nelson said. "I guess you could say that it put everything into perspective as to why I am away from my family - to help secure my two beautiful daughters from future attacks," he said, and added that a NYFD firefighter on the tour actually thanked *him* for what *he* was doing.

He has been activated at Westover's command post since early November and is scheduled to return from deployment on Sept. 11.

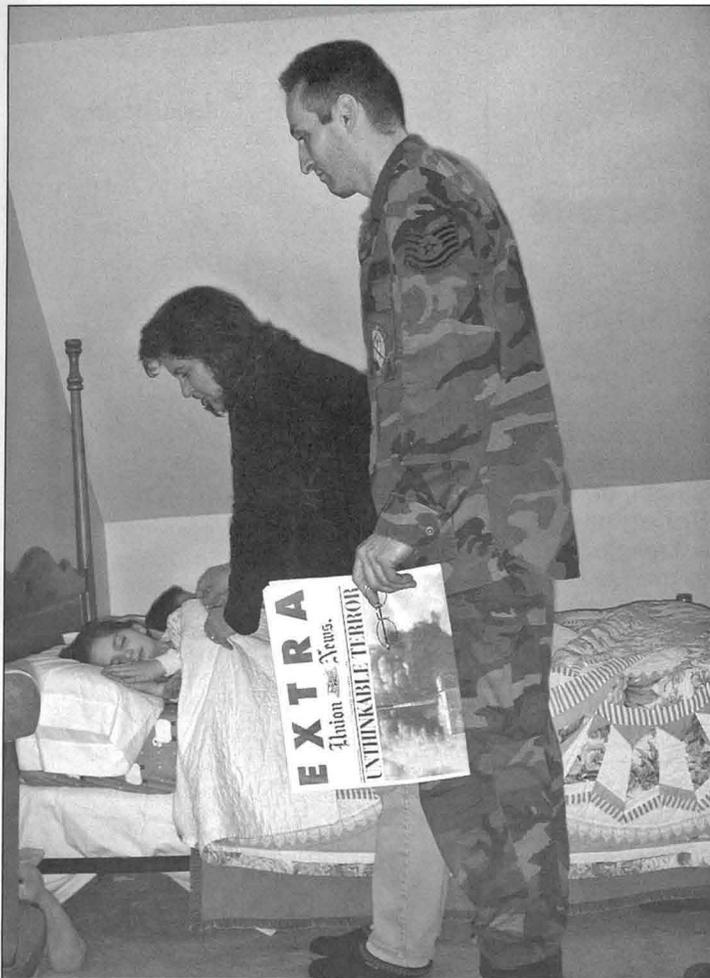
Many family roles have also flip-flopped because duty calls. The Sheerans are a military family from Albany, N.Y., with 43 years combined service. Maj. Tony Sheeran, a 439th CES operations officer, was not activated but his wife, TSgt.



The Mundt family (in 2001)

June 3, 5: more members of the 439th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron, 439th Aeromedical Staging Squadron
58th Aerial Port Squadron activated

blessing for most



FREEDOM FROM FEAR — This photo is modeled after the famed Norman Rockwell painting of the same name — one of the “Four Freedoms” series painted in the 1940’s. The photo depicts the motivation behind the sacrifice made by many activated reservists.

photo by SMSgt. Sandi Michon

Susie Sheeran, works at Westover’s readiness/plans section and their daughter Andrea serves with the Air National Guard in New York. Sue was activated Feb. 5, and Andrea was deployed to the desert on June 5.

“My husband is holding down the fort while his women are off to war,” quipped Sue, and added that they also had to delay their plans to build a new home. “We have to step up to the plate and do what you have to do. It’s hard and easy at the same time because we are an Air Force family,” she said.

Most reservists are positive about their patriotic duty, but many, like Sue, say that it doesn’t stop the loneliness associated with long-term hotel living. Added demands stress marriages — some adapt and get stronger — but others crack from the strain.

The Sheerans represent a peek into the myriad of adjustments and challenges families have coped with during activation. Those left to run the home often suffer additional setbacks. In some homes, where husbands and wives “tag team” babysit-

ting roles, activation of one spouse has forced the other spouse to give up their job.

Others are hurt by the financial impact of activation. Some have coped with up to 50 percent pay cuts and they have dipped deeply into savings to survive. TSgt. Pete Rogers, command post technician, endured a pay reduction with the expenses of a new home purchased shortly before activation. He augmented his military pay with part-time civilian work on Cape Cod to bridge the difference, and keep his home. But, sadly, Rogers also represents a sizable portion of reservists who have no job to reclaim after activation. Due to economic downturns after Sept. 11, many companies have been forced to downsize, thus eliminating the reservists’ job during their active duty absence.

Money issues have been a mixed bag for activated reservists. Some, like TSgt. Janet Bicho, 439th AW legal manager, have made out well. “My company (Mass. Mutual) has made up the difference between my civilian and military base pay,” Bicho explained, and added that Mass. Mutual is continuing her insurance coverage and 401K contributions in her absence. “I’m thrilled to be cleaning up credit card debt and medical bills,” she said.

Reservists who may have only worked part-time prior to activation typically have enjoyed an increase in income while on active duty.

As an orthopaedic rehabilitation doctor in New Jersey, Maj. Michael Palmer, 439th AMDS chief of aerospace medicine experienced a serious drop in income while serving full-time at Westover. To salvage his income, and to keep his practice healthy, Palmer has worked his civilian practice on his two days off per week. While his commute is tiring and he has missed his wife and son while away, Palmer has noticed the unexpected benefit of community support for his patriotic efforts. “Rather than a decrease in patients, I am often triple-booked,” said Palmer. “I repeatedly apologize for making them wait, but they are more than pleasant and — more often than not — they thank me for serving our country,” he said.

With the due date for demobilization set for most in September and still uncertain for others, what the war on terrorism activation delivers remains to be fully seen. But, just as the pains of labor are tempered by the love for the child, the pains of activation for most reservists are tempered by love of country and the commitment to nurture the freedom so many others have delivered to us.



Rogers



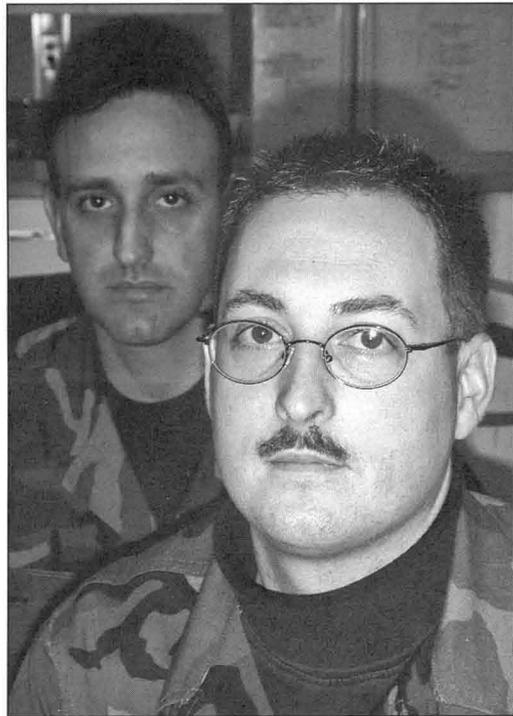
Bicho

July 1: the number of Westover reservists activated reaches over 1,300

July 3: demobilization came for 31 firefighters, 439th Civil Engineering Squadron

July 2002

July 8: demobilization for 63 members of the 58th Aerial Port Squadron, 439th Aeromedical Staging Squadron



Red Cross honors Westover heroes

TO THE RESCUE — SSgt. Anthony Gambardella and TSgt. Thomas Evangelisto, 439th AGS members, saved an injured driver trapped in a burning car on Route 91 South, on Feb. 27. The Springfield chapter of the American Red Cross will present the American Heroes' Award to the pair on at a Sept. 11 ceremony.

Westover hosts Employer Appreciation Day

by SMSgt. Sandi Michon

As a gesture of gratitude for keeping their employees for months on end, Westover hosted a special Employer Appreciation Day on July 18 for bosses of activated reservists.

Thirty-five employers attended the event that included breakfast, a C-5 flight, and visits to reservists' work sites. Employers interviewed related the hardships of getting the job done with fewer employees, but also felt the hardships were part of their patriotic duty.

William Booker supervises SrA. Richard English with the U.S. Postal Service in Woburn, Mass. On Sept. 11, English, an aeromedical apprentice with the 439th MDS, was called off his route to come out to Westover. Vital clinic staff were stranded in Texas and English filled the void and was activated two weeks later. "We were very proud to have our employee serve our country," said Booker. Even though they had to scramble to find someone to replace him, "It's a very small sacrifice on our part," he said.

Brian Rust misses the role of SSgt. Pablo Rodriguez, who is a patrolman with

the community services bureau in Northampton. Rodriguez has been activated with the 439th Security Forces at Westover for nearly a year. Rust explained that Rodriguez is part of a five-member team and his absence has a major impact. "It's the price you pay. We have to pitch in more, but it's our donation," Rust said, but stressed that Rodriguez is paying the higher price.

Some employers see a link between the dual roles their employees serve. As security officer supervisor with the Hampden County Sheriff's Department, SSgt. Richard Garcia's civilian job contributes to a local sense of order and security. "We see Garcia's military service as contributing to a sense of order and security on a worldwide scale," said his supervisor John Fitzgerald.

Col. Martin M. Mazick, 439th AW commander, agreed that uniquely-skilled reservists provide added benefits to employers, but also praised the employers as a key element to national defense.

"We appreciate what you've done for your country," Mazick said to both reservists and their employers.

By the numbers FY 02

Hours flown
7,572

Tricare issues
5,789

ID cards issued
5,742

Dental x-rays
2,230

Immunizations
2,002

Hearing tests
1,267

Deployments
904

Dog tags issued
550

C-5 tire changes
126

Personnel losses
76

Hospitalizations
3

Aug. 1: demobilization began for the 337th Airlift Squadron and 439th Operations Group

Patriot People

Name: Uncle Sam
Age: 86
Rank: American
Unit: United States of America
Civilian position: Same as above
Years of service: "Lifer"
Address: Anywhere I'm needed
Favorite food: American Apple Pie
Favorite sport: Baseball, America's pastime
Favorite hobby: Visiting the troops here and overseas
Ideal vacation: Seeing the country from sea to shining sea
Best way to relax: Recruiting America's finest young people
Favorite motto: "I want you ..."
Favorite hero: General George Washington
Favorite music: Lee Greenwood ("God Bless the U.S.A.")
Favorite movie: "Yankee Doodle Dandy"
Favorite aircraft: Air Force One
Favorite colors: Red, White and Blue
What would I do if I won \$1 million: Support the troops any way I could



Uncle Sam

What a difference a year makes... from page 3

tions, no major accidents or mishaps despite a heavy flying schedule and an outstanding unit award for the wing as proof positive that, when called, the 439th responds with resounding success. They can also point to the pride many felt of going to the defense of a country they swore to protect from enemies foreign and domestic.

It's clear the wing did its job, and did it well. It's also clear that the support reservists received from their families and civilian employers contributed to getting the job done. The Air Force Reserve is often described as a three-legged stool with the Reserve, family members and civilian employers representing each leg. It's said that if any leg were out of whack, the stool would topple over since the support of all three legs is needed. Westover's "stool" stood strong.

Today, the talk is about demobilization and most reservists are preparing for the transition back to their civilian work lives. However, units such as the 439th Security Forces, will continue to answer the call as they remain activated.

One memorable year has passed that will forever change the landscape and change our perception of the word "normal." September 11 is a day that affected everyone at Westover in one way or another. Like those who remember where they were when, for instance, President Kennedy was shot or

Pearl Harbor was attacked, today's generation will remember where they were on September 11.

If the last 12 months are any indication,

September will also be remembered as a time when Westover showed its true colors by responding in true patriot form.

Oct. 5 – Employer Appreciation Day

Reservist's name, rank and unit: _____

Reservist's home address: _____

Reservist's daytime telephone number: _____

Employer's name and title: _____

Employer's Social Security Number: _____

Employer's company name: _____

Breakfast for employer: YES _____ NO _____

Breakfast for reservist: YES _____ NO _____

I understand that I may nominate one person annually, and only an individual who is my supervisor, foreman, manager, etc.

Signature _____

(Falsification of information on this form can be punishable under the Uniform Code of Military Justice.)

Return this form to:

439th Airlift Wing/ Public Affairs, 100 Lloyd St., East Wing, Suite 103
 Westover ARB, Mass. 01022-1825

We're all in this together



COMING HOME — Channel 40 news anchor Ray Hershel interviews the family of SMSgt. Joe DiMartino, 439th AGS supervisor, enjoys his first few minutes back at Westover following a three-month tour in Spain. Such tours are ongoing for many members of the 439th Airlift Wing. The wing activated more than 1,300 men and women in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Although selected demobilizations are set for the end of September, time alone will tell the final outcome.

photo by SMSgt. Sandi Michon

PATRIOT

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



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