

- ✓ Re-engining completed on Westover's 16 C-5s... April Fools!
- ✓ Community can show support for our troops (back page)
- ✓ Patriot Wing delivers Patriots for Patriots (picture back page)

Hours of operation

Flyers Inn

Lodging desk 24/7
Commercial 413-593-5421
DSN: 589-2700/base Ext. 2700

Chapel Center

Chaplain available 24/7
Pager: 413-785-3195, base Ext. 3031

Fitness Center

Monday-Friday, 5:30 a.m.-8 p.m.
Saturday (non-UTA), 9 a.m.-3 p.m.
Sunday (non-UTA), closed
UTA Saturdays, 8 a.m.-8 p.m.
UTA Sundays, 8 a.m.-4 p.m.

Bowling Center

Monday-Friday lunch and bowling,
11 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

Westover Consolidated Club

Breakfast: 6-8 a.m. until Thursday
lunch, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.
dinner, 5-8 p.m.

Westover Dining Facility

Breakfast, daily, 5-8 a.m.,
\$1.60 for those on per diem,
UTA status - free
Midnight meals, 11 p.m.-1 a.m.
boxed meals provided daily

Family Support Center

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Saturday and Sunday of A UTA,
9 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
Saturday of B UTA, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
closed Sunday of B UTA

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club, dining facility, Hangar Avenue,
supply, and bowling center.

Wing medics know price of war



TSgt. Gary, a medical technician with the 439th Aeromedical Staging Squadron, checks on wounded patients before transporting them from Ramstein AB, Germany to Landstuhl Regional Medical Center.

—photo by TSgt. Justin Pyle

by SMSgt. Sandi Michon

Westover's medical reservists train for war and now find themselves closer to the front lines in a real world scenario.

As the dead and wounded were airlifted into Ramstein AB during the weekend of March 22-23, 15 members of the 439th ASTS were pressed into action.

"We arrived in Germany at 2 a.m. and hit the ground running," said MSgt. William, superintendent of administration. (Last names of those deployed cannot be published.) Within hours, they were transporting wounded from C-141s to nearby Landstuhl Army Regional Medical Center. Among the patients were grenade bombing victims with the 101st Airborne, and Marines ambushed by the fake surrender of Iraqi soldiers.

"It was pretty intense," said William. "You hear about casualties on the news, but when you put a face to the statistic, it makes it personal. When you look at a wounded soldier, it brings it all home — it solidifies our purpose," he said.

CMSgt. Mark, 439th ASTS medical services manager, said Westover's ASTS team is also at Ramstein, working with a McGuire AFB unit setting up a 100-bed contingency

aeromedical staging facility to work jointly with the 86th Aeromedical Staging Facility. He mentioned the 16 remains that arrived at the Ramstein morgue recently. "It's sobering... it brings you a lot closer to reality," he said. "But, we're concentrating on trying to keep people alive."

The increased activity came just days after the medical cadre departed Westover on March 21 to work the Aeromedical Staging Facility at Ramstein. The team includes two flight surgeons, nine medical technicians, two medical administration technicians and a pharmacy technician. TSgt. Jeffrey, biomedical equipment journeyman with the 439th AMDS, accompanied the ASTS team which is scheduled to be in theater for up to six months.

Westover's ASTS personnel support the Mobile Aeromedical Staging Facility (MASF) and ASF echelons of medical care.

The 439th AES personnel find themselves even closer to the front lines as four Aeromedical Evacuation Liaison Teams (AELTs) are deployed to various locations in theater. According to Maj. Marie Dufault, chief of medical mobility, the four-member AELTs consist of a medical services coordina-

(continued on next page)

439th AW MISSION: Actively support national objectives on a global scale with ready, mobility forces

Meds... (Continued from page 1)
tor, one flight nurse and two radio operators. A relatively new concept, the AELT works the transport details between the FST and the MASF – and actually flies with the patient until they arrive at a fixed hospital unit.

Westover's AES also deployed a PMI (Patient Movement Item) cell which consists of two personnel who work with operations teams to move medical equipment and order supplies. "They are the logistical aid for medical operations," explained Dufault.

The AES also deploys 11-member MASF augmentation packages to help staff Mobile Aeromedical Facilities. The package includes four flight nurses, six medical technicians and one administration specialist.

To round out the medical treatment alphabet, the ASTS expects to deploy three-member CCATs – or Critical Care Trauma Teams – each made up of a flight surgeon, critical care nurse and a cardio-pulmonary technician. Lt. Col. Stanley Chartoff and Capt. Shawn Howard served on a CCAT in Afghanistan from March to June 2002 and expect to be deployed again any day. They treated severely wounded Apache pilots, Afghani children wounded by land mines and a U.S. Army civilian contractor.

While Westover medical reservists train for medical emergencies, there is always the hope that their skills will not be required – but when they are – there they are.

Funeral services to be held on April 2 for local Marine

Funeral services for Marine Corps Gunner Sergeant Phillip Jordan of Enfield, Conn., will be conducted at Holy Family Church, 23 Simon Rd., Enfield, at 12:45 p.m. on April 2.

Flags in Connecticut have been ordered to half-staff that day in honor of the Marine NCO who died in an ambush near An Nasiriyah, Iraq by an enemy which pretended to surrender and pulled out weapons.

Jordan leaves a wife, Amanda, and six-year-old son, Tyler.



Contact us:
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BIG GULP – Aerial porters maneuver a Patriot missile battery radar unit onto a Galaxy on Tuesday morning. The desert colored radar unit was recently upgraded at one of Raytheon's Massachusetts plants. A second radar unit was also loaded on the aircraft. --Photo by MSgt. W.C. Pope

Community can show support for our troops

The community wants to say thank you to the troops and often asks for help from Patriot Wing members. The answer is that we cannot fly donations overseas. Also, the Department of Defense urges people not to mail "care packages" except to family members.

The community can help through the Family Support Center at Ext. 3024 and the USO at Ext. 3290.

The Family Support Center is accepting toiletries and other gifts which they are packaging for troops in the Passenger Terminal. Letters written to the troops by children are also being left for them to pick up in the terminal. The USO is accepting non-perishable foods for military families who use

their food pantry. Cash donations can also be made to the USO.

To show support, people can send greetings by the following web sites: defendamerica.mil/support_troops.html, usocares.org/home.html or army.mil/operations/iraq/faq.html.

Pat Stats

Served since Feb. 2, 2003
3,273 passengers - 875 aircraft
11,757,853 pounds of cargo
Info from MSgt. Jim Garrity, 42APS

Fuel since Feb. 1
5,434,389 gallons of JP-8
info from Jim Maloney, fuels

Express-ions



☑ Don't forget to turn your clocks ahead one hour Sunday, April 6, 2003, 2 a.m.

☑ Col. Charles Brown celebrates 30th year release from the Hanoi Hilton (back page)

☑ Westover Neighbor shows Red, White and Blue

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Wing command post is best in AFRC

Article and photo

by SSgt. Andrew Biscoe

From Westover to Afghanistan, they put in 24 hours' worth of hard work each day.

It finally paid off for the men and women of the Patriot Wing Command Post. The 12-member staff of reservists, who link the heart and soul of Westover's flying operations, recently won the honors as best command post of the year in the large manning category for 2002 in Air Force Reserve Command.

The award recognized 365 days of the most demanding workload ever for SMSgt. Joe Fitzgibbon, Command Post superintendent, and the staff. Besides the 24-hour commitment to Westover, they volunteered for worldwide deployments half of a world away for Operation Enduring Freedom.

On top of all that, 2002 was Westover's busiest year since Operation Desert Storm in 1991. The award cited the Command Post's support of 6,973 flying hours, and more than 450 C-5 launches from the base, averaging more than 40 launches per month.

The controllers did their jobs so well that they received accolades from their superiors all across the globe. That combination proved to be the difference in the award, said Capt. Elaine Chaloux, mobilized officer in charge. And she said it was Fitzgibbon who led the way. "He has a lot on his hands," Chaloux said. "He is a hard worker. He and the staff got all kinds of kudos when they deployed, too - from commanders at deployed locations and from AMC."

Westover command post controllers don't have a lot of time these days to savor their award. They are kept busy by a record number of C-5s transiting Westover as the 24-hour stage operation enters its third month. Not long ago, eight generations of aircraft, with 10 recoveries was the norm. That's all changed with the massive movement of troops and cargo through Westover for Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"We're at about 14 generations and 18 recoveries per day now," Fitzgibbon said.

To help handle the work, Fitzgibbon recently brought on two augmentees from the command post at Dover AFB, Del. A1C Danielle McGhee and Amn. Tiffany Toatley arrived in early March and will be here for three months.

"I like everything about this job," Toatley said. "I like knowing that I am a part of the



Amn. Tiffany Toatley, right, an operations controller augmentee from Dover AFB, Del., and SSgt. Shelley Foust, command post controller, establish communication with transiting C-5 aircrews.

mission that's carrying helicopters and tanks." Fitzgibbon said Toatley has acclimated quickly with all that has to be learned at a new base. That's quite an adjustment for a new airman who has only been an operations controller for seven months.

Toatley and a C-5 pilot used the jargon that helps speed important communication along as a male voice suddenly modulated into one of the many command post's consoles. "Zero-one-one, you're Lima Charlie. How me?" Toatley answered. "Lima Charlie," the pilot responded, as the crew confirmed the transmission was loud and clear.

Toatley's transmissions are only part of the crucial communication hub that senior staff and aircrews rely on. About three hours away from landing at Westover, aircrews make their first contact with these professionals to make sure all is ready once the wheels hit the runway. Toatley and everyone in the command post must have the mental discipline to handle many tasks at once. In addition to contact with aircrews, the command post also oversees COMSEC operations, classified communications (SIPRANET) transmissions, secure areas, and classified information.

"The Command Post isn't for everyone," Chaloux said. "You have to be able to handle a certain amount of stress, and have situ-

(continued on next page)

Command... (Continued)

ational awareness." They must ensure all messages from higher headquarters reach the wing commander as quickly as possible. The Command Post also teams with the air terminal operations center (ATOC), transient alert, maintenance, base operations, and the unit control center in the 337th Airlift Squadron to ensure all flying operations run smoothly.

The controllers can't juggle multi-tasking 24 hours a day without a break, Fitzgibbon said. To ease tension, the staff tries to balance an intense military atmosphere and the inherent discipline with the job with a sense of. "We focus on rapport and humor on the job," he said. "And we just try to work together as effectively as possible to try to get the aircraft and crews married up and on their way."

Brig. Gen. Martin M. Mazick, 439th AW commander, said the award was well-earned. "Our wing command post has proven their dedication and professionalism with their exemplary performance throughout 2002," he said. "The members of our command post team have a proven track record at home and overseas. This command-level award could not be more deserved."

Pat Stats

Served since Feb. 2, 2003
3,399 passengers - 952 aircraft
12,181,900 pounds of cargo
Info from MSgt. Jim Garrity, 42APS

Meals

4,979 hot meals served
Box lunches: 3,954
Info from TSgt. David Beauregard, 439SVS

Fuel since Feb. 1
5,798,424 gallons of JP-8
info from Jim Maloney, fuels

PATRIOT
express

Contact us:
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Across 30 years, ex-POW is cheered

by SMSgt. Sandi Michon

As U.S. prisoners-of-war await their fate in Iraq, Col. Charles A. Brown, 439th maintenance group commander recalled the end of his own POW experience 30 years earlier.

On April 1, 1973, a young, gaunt Capt. Brown walked off the C-9 onto Westover's tarmac after spending 101 days as a prisoner of war at the "Hanoi Hilton" after his B-52 was hit by a missile over Hanoi Dec. 19, 1972.

Base personnel commemorated the homecoming anniversary with a surprise ceremony. After the applause ebbed, Brown was quick to say, "The real heroes are the ones who didn't come home."

Brown's experience as a POW takes on renewed significance in light of current events in Iraq. "It brings back old memories," said the soft-spoken logistics commander. His most vivid memory is the first day of confinement — the transition from an active combatant to a prisoner. "The first day is the most dangerous," he said, and explained that prior to confinement, most POWs first survive a firefight, and other forms of enemy brutality. Brown was televised as a POW in Vietnam and he posited that it may have saved his life. "If you end up on camera, you generally get released because of the increased accountability it creates, he explained. "In a larger sense, it's more dangerous to not appear on camera."

Brown sees similarities between North Vietnam and Iraq. "Both situations involve dictators that have little value for human life," he said. He also saw the parallels of anti-war sentiments as damaging to the mission and to the morale of U.S. troops. "Peter Arnett [former NBC reporter] reminds me of Hanoi Jane," said Brown.

Three decades have helped heal the psychological pain of his POW confinement, but Brown says his experiences also helped him

focus on what's important. "You find you place greater emphasis on relationships," he said, and added that his faith played a role in his survival. As they "tapped" GBA (God Bless America) on cell walls, they also knew what time of day it was by counting the bell tolls from the Hanoi Catholic church nearby. "They constantly fed us lies over the radio, but my faith helped me know they were just lies," he said.

Many base personnel shook Brown's hand, and thanked him again for his service. Brown is one of the few former Vietnam POWs still actively serving in the military. "I remember seeing his skinny face in the C-9 window when it taxied into the parking ramp at Westover," said CMSgt. George Kudla, 439th AMDS superintendent of medical administration. "He asked how the Boston Bruins were doing," Kudla recalled amid good-natured laughter.

Brown has nearly 35 years military service and is serving in his third war. "I think I'm closer to the end of my career than at the beginning," he quipped.



Brown

Dear General Mazick

I wanted to send this letter to let you know that I support all of the American men and women who serve not only at Westover but our armed forces through out the world.

The way I am showing my support for them is by fastening an American Flag to the roof of my house. I realize it may be like finding a needle in a haystack, but it is illuminated and can only be seen from the air.

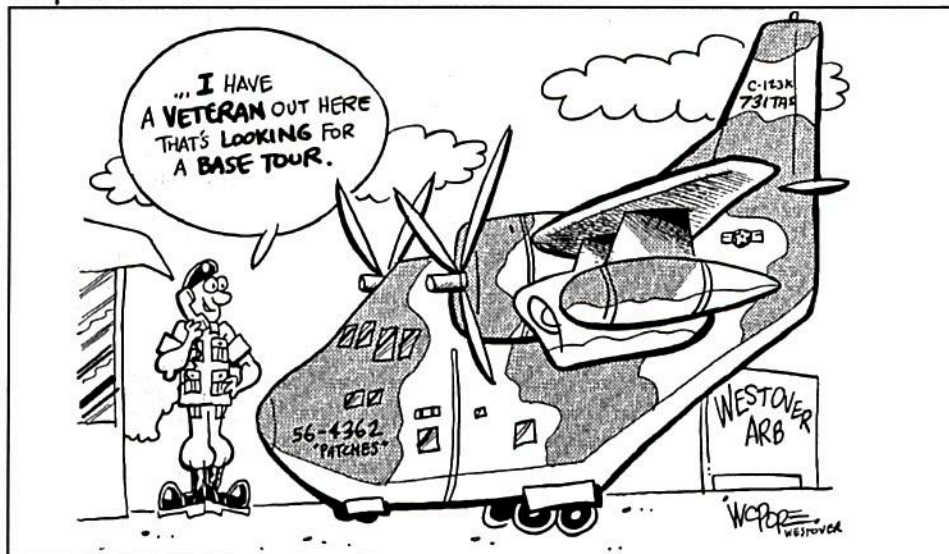
My hope is that a pilot, a support person, or just a passenger can look out their window and see the flag as they land or take off from Westover. I truly hope that those who do see it will realize my support, because the flag is there for them.

Sincerely,

Kenneth Alves, A Patriot from Ludlow.

PS: God bless all the fine American men and women who fight to keep us free.

Express-ions



- ☒ Children's words support troops (back page)
- ☒ Bowling Mania, every Monday at the Westover Bowling Center, 6 to 9 p.m. \$1 per game, \$1 shoe rental
- ☒ Visit us at www.afrc.af.mil/439aw

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Aerial porters move Guard squadron

Article by SSgt. Andrew Biscoe

Photos by MSgt. W.C. Pope

A joint operation between Westover's two aerial port squadrons saw to more than 700,000 pounds of communication equipment from a local Air National Guard unit shipped overseas from Westover.

Reservists from the 42nd and 58th Aerial Port Squadrons joined forces to move the equipment of the 103rd Air Control Squadron from Westover to a Southwest Asia location.

In all, it took nine C-17 Globemaster III airlifters to deploy the equipment from Westover.

One of the unit's 250 members awaited the arrival of one of the C-17s while he ate ice cream in the passenger terminal.

"This is excellent ice cream," said SSgt. Kevin Townley. "The USO ladies that work in here are the best."

The 103rd ACS, based in Orange, Conn., is a geographically separated unit that falls under the A-10 equipped 103rd Fighter Group assigned at Bradley IAP in nearby Windsor Locks, Conn. Pilots and support members of the A-10 flying squadron were earlier deployed to a Southwest Asia air base.

Townley said the communication's squadron's is similar to that of the crew of an E-3A AWACS - control of military fighters. The major difference is that the unit controls



TSgt. James Barnes, 58th APS, assembles lumber to serve as buffer material for Connecticut Air National Guard communications equipment onboard a C-17.

the fighters with equipment on the ground.

Their mission includes utilizing satellite photography, monitoring the skies with radar and operating long-range communications equipment.

Townley, a satellite communications technician, did not know how long the unit might be assigned overseas. Recently married, he was told to plan for at least a year to be deployed. Contrary to what people thought, the 103rd ACS was called up for the War on Terror, not Operation Iraqi Freedom. "I see this as an opportunity to do a real world mission," the 7-year veteran said. "It's what I have been training for all these years."

Lt. Col. James Carey, 42nd Aerial Port Squadron commander, coordinated the airlift of the 103rd from Westover with the Guard, 22nd Air Force and the airlift control center at AMC headquarters at Scott AFB, Ill.

The aerial port commander described the operation as another successful response to a "can you?" query.

More than 60 pieces of equipment was moved to Westover from Connecticut. Most of the equipment was arranged in rows in a long-term parking lot near the medical facility on Walker Avenue.



Satellite communications equipment is rolled on the back of one of nine C-17s which were loaded with Connecticut Air National Guard equipment.

Words of children show support for troops who protect their world

by MSgt. Tom Allocco

Today, everyone in uniform is a hero to children. That's especially true for our neighbors who have been showing their appreciation with gifts and notes from the beginning of the surge.

The youngsters of Valley Christian School, North Hampton recently collected toiletries and put together "care packages" for the troops in the passenger terminal. People going overseas were able to take with them packages of candy, lip balm, pens, shaving cream, bottled water and other gifts thanks to the generosity of the children.

From Heritage Baptist Church, Springfield, came a cardboard box of letters from children who are immensely grateful for what the troops are doing for them.

"I want to thank you for how you are protecting our world," wrote Leah. From Jessica came a meticulously penned note that said, "Thank you for protecting me. I'm praying for you."

Wrote Rebecca: "Do you have a family waiting for you at home? I'm glad you are saving our country."

The notes are simple sentiments from children, but they are a boost for troops awaiting the call to board aircraft to take them overseas.

"I know they were reading them. They were sitting here going through the whole pile," said Marilyn Spofford of the USO.

High school students from Chicopee High School, Chicopee Vocational Tech and Chicopee Comprehensive made a 12-minute video at the Telecommunications Center of Chicopee Public Schools featuring brief expressions of support.

"Thanks for helping bring world peace closer," one student said. Other messages from the Chicopee students include: "Come home safe," "Semper Fi," "Thank you for defending our country."

A group of students recited the Pledge of

Allegiance. "This is to honor you. We appreciate your sacrifices. You guys are really awesome," they said.

Much of the video features skits done in an adolescent, humorous vein, interspersed with such sentiments as "America rocks." "The troops watch this and they go hysterical. They laugh and say 'play that again'," Marilyn said.

East Longmeadow school children conducted a food drive of non-perishable foods which they donated to the USO Food Pantry in Building 1100 for military families which need help.

Brownie Girl Scout Troop 4616 of Naugatuck, Conn. assembled Easter packages of toiletries, letters, cookies and small games for troops in the passenger terminal.

"This was their way of thanking the guys and no sooner did they come in that they guys were taking them. Marines were diverted here from Cherry Point and they were very grateful for the gifts," Marilyn said.

As important as the gifts were the sentiments expressed by the children.

"Dear Soldier," wrote Julianne. "Thank you for protecting our country. You are very brave. I hope you come home safe. Do you have a cat or dog or a hamster? Because I have them. From your friend."

College courses available on base

Nichols College of Dudley is offering accelerated associate's, bachelor's and master's degree courses in business administration at the Base Hangar on Thursdays. Classes are scheduled from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 6 to 10 p.m.

Activated reservists and Guard members can receive full tuition assistance.

To learn more, call Nichols College at 1-800-580-1776 or send an e-mail to military@nichols.edu.

Express-ions

Softball team pitches for members

The Westover Women's Softball team is seeking interested females who would like to join the team that will be playing in the Chicopee women's slow pitch softball league. Last year's season – the first for the Westover team in the league – saw the women's team take home the first place trophy!

For more information, call CMSgt. Tammy Vezina at Ext. 3428.

S.A.R.T. Training

There will be a Search and Recovery Training Exercise at the Base Fitness Center on Tuesday, April 15. Team volunteers are needed. For more information contact Rick Heller at Ext. 3958 or e-mail richard.heller@westover.af.mil.

Passover Seder offered

The Jewish festival of Passover will begin this year on Wednesday, April 16th. Individuals needing information on attending a Seder meal in the home of a member of a local Synagogue may contact the Chapel Center at Ext. 3031 for further information.

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3,553 passengers - 1,066 aircraft
13,005,638 pounds of cargo
Info from MSgt. Jim Garrity, 42APS

Meals

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Box lunches: 4,145
Info from TSgt. David Beauregard, 439SVS

Fuel since Feb. 1

6,162,180 gallons of JP-8
Info from Jim Maloney, fuels

PATRIOT
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Contact us:

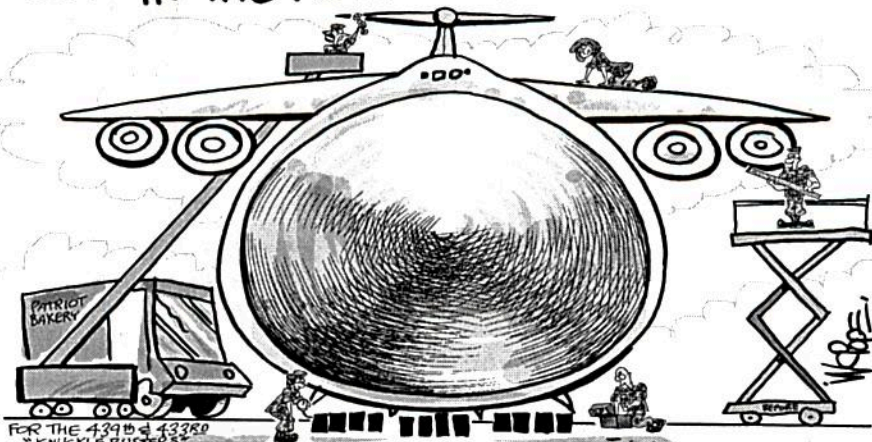
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WESTOVER GROUND TROOPS ENGAGED IN THE HEAT OF BATTLE...



- ☑ Chicopee board gives pat on back (back page)
- ☑ 90.8 inches have fallen on Westover (back page)
- ☑ Get your free Celtics tickets today! (bottom left)

We're celebrities on radio airwaves

The Patriot Wing is a celebrity on local radio airwaves.

Country station WPKX 97.9, Springfield, is dedicating songs to squadrons and members of the 439th Airlift Wing.

Another country station, WPMQ 95.3, Northampton, is asking for the names of Patriot Wing residents of Hampshire and Franklin Counties to be saluted on the air. E-mail DJ@WRSI.COM or call 585-9555 to submit names to be read on the air.

The morning personalities of Dave James and the "J" Crew of light rock WMAS 94.7, Springfield, broadcast from the Westover Dining Facility starting at 6 a.m. on Wednesday. Among their guests on air was Col. Thomas Mauzaka, special assistant to the wing commander, who touted on the air the breakfast prepared by Services as "the best in New England."

All three stations are broadcasting appeals on the air and their web sites for donations to help military members and their families through the Westover Family Support Center, Pioneer Family USO and the Red Cross.

Free Celtics tickets, bus For Wednesday's game

The Westover MWR program is offering 275 free Celtics tickets and free bus transportation for the Detroit Pistons game at the Fleet Center, Boston, at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 16.

The tickets are available on a first-come, first-served basis to those with a military ID and their dependents. MWR is arranging free bus transportation to the game from Westover.

Sign-up for the tickets is being done at the Westover Fitness Center, which is open from 5 a.m. to 2 a.m. No reservations for tickets will be accepted over the phone.

The tickets are being donated by the Celtics to salute the Patriot Wing. Westover MWR is providing the free bus service.

For more information, call the Westover Fitness Center at Ext. 3958.

Fleet Services shines up air bridge



Fleet Services aerial porters SrA. Charles McNutt (left) and SSgt. Dan O'Flaherty prepare to work on an outbound C-5 from their high lift service truck.

Article and photo by MSgt. Tom Allocco

The "Westover welcome" is a well documented phenomenon. When people experience it, they remember it. Since the start of the surge, every Galaxy passing through Westover keeps the word moving worldwide that the "Westover welcome" is four star.

When people talk about being treated right, they are talking about a phenomenon that starts with 42nd APS Fleet Services. The aerial porters of Fleet Services are among the first people an inbound crew meets on the ground and the last they see when an outbound crew buttons up.

The Fleet Service aerial porters have the kind of job that's easy to overlook when it's done right. They're the ones who come to work every day and promise that when people leave Westover they will be able to say the "Westover welcome" included freshly cleaned and swept cabin and passenger area, the efficient delivery of flight meals and crew and passenger kits of coffee ups, water and other "expendables". For Westover aircraft they provide fresh pillows and blankets.

There's not a lot of glamour, but Fleet Services has no regrets. They work hard doing something that needs to be done, they are among the first and last at the aircraft and they get to drive big, monstrous vehicles on the flightline. It's not a bad job.

The big vehicle is a high lift service truck which carries the buckets of water, flight meals, cleaning gear and items to be delivered to the aircraft. The crew stabilizes it and raises it to the fuselage hatch on scissor lifts.

Making a delivery recently to an outbound aircraft were SSgt. Dan O'Flaherty of Canton, Conn. and SrA. Charles McNutt of Westfield, two 42nd APS aerial porters who volunteered to work 12-hour shifts in Fleet Services. Just because they are way behind the scenes, doesn't mean there isn't job satisfaction in Fleet Services.

"I work in human resources for Connecticut Institute for the Blind, sitting behind a desk all day. Here I wear a totally different hat. I enjoy it. It makes the time go by a lot faster," O'Flaherty said.

McNutt knows that he is contributing to the "Westover welcome."

"Just yesterday I was cleaning and someone said 'you know the only place I see this happen is Westover'. He actually said 'thank you'," McNutt said.

"When you're in Fleet Services you're giving somebody comfort. We're doing the best we can. Everybody's got a part to play in this thing," O'Flaherty said.

"Sometimes planes arrive after a long flight. They might have flown to Europe and back, been on lots of legs. We don't know what happens downrange. Maybe they

(continued on next page)

Fleet... (Continued from page 1)

haven't had the opportunity to be cleaned when it needed to be done. We have the opportunity here," he said.

Like any job, there's more to it than people realize. When reporting for their shift at 6:30 a.m. or 6:30 p.m., they start with a briefing on flightline safety, reminders about customs and agricultural precautions for aircraft from overseas and other procedures. Under agricultural regulations, trash from overseas has to be treated with elaborate precautions. It's kept in a special locker, weighed and tagged. The number of bags is recorded and before they are taken to West Springfield to be incinerated.

Fleet Services is also responsible for doing an inventory of chains and tiedown devices and to replace them when needed.

"The briefings are good training. It reestablishes standards which we need to work by," O'Flaherty said.

"There could be icing conditions or thunderstorms, aircraft turning, parking. You need to be aware of that," O'Flaherty said. "In the winter the plane is colder than outside and in the summer it's hotter than outside," he said.

It's the aircraft which dictate the daily schedule for Fleet Services aerial porters.

During a shift, they could be working on up to two dozen inbound and outbound aircraft.

SMSgt. Miguel Colon is among the dispatchers who mark a board with inbound and outbound aircraft and send out Fleet Service teams. He sits behind a computer to track aircraft with a "flight follower" computer program which can track a plane from the time it leaves Ramstein AB, Germany or Travis AFB, Calif. and arrives at Westover.

A hectic schedule can mean missed meals because the airplanes come first. It makes you appreciate the small luxuries.

"There are no normal hours. You may only have time to eat donuts and coffee," O'Flaherty said.

"Yesterday the USO had homemade minestrone soup in the Passenger Terminal. Today there is turkey and noodles. Those USO women work hard for us. They're here every day," he said.

As long as there is a surge, Fleet Services will be sending airplanes around the world with a good word for the "Westover welcome."

"They're behind the scenes, but what Fleet Services people do is make it a lot more liveable for aircrews and passengers," said MSgt. Dan Witt, aircraft services supervisor.

Chicopee supports Iraqi Freedom troops

The municipal officials who represent the people of City of Chicopee have gone on record as supporting the men and women of American Armed Forces who are serving in Operation Enduring Freedom.

The Chicopee Board of Aldermen voted the expression of support on April 1. In a letter to Brig. Gen. Martin M. Mazick, 439th AW commander, Richard R. Goyette, president of the Board of Aldermen wrote that vote supports the "endeavor to secure the rights of the Iraqi people in their pursuit of freedom."

"The resolution further states that the Board supports all military personnel throughout the world fighting oppression wherever it may occur and that the war in Iraq will end soon and that all military personnel will return home safely.

The resolution was directed to President Bush.

Snowfall nears record

This is the winter that's number two, but tries harder. The Westover Base Weather Station on Monday recorded 2.2 inches of snow, which makes this the second snowiest winter since they started keeping records.

Since the first snowfall of three-tenths of an inch on Oct. 23, a total of 90.8 inches have fallen. The local record is 107.7 inches which came down in 1995-96.

And it's not over until it's over, warns Kurt Osgood, supervisor of the Westover Base Weather Station. He noted that last year winter weather continued all the way to May 18. That was a "B" UTA Saturday when enough snow fell to make driving hazardous and make cold, wet and miserable participants in a Team Yankee exercise in Dogpatch.

A late snowfall this year could set a record for longest snowy season, because the first snow on Oct. 23 was unusually early in an area where the first measurable snow usually falls between Veterans Day and Thanksgiving.

People will long remember the brutal weather of February with its long string of below zero days and 28.7 inches of snow. That's more than the average entire winter snowfall of 25.6 for this area.

Osgood blames a change in the jet stream which dipped down in eastern North America, bringing down cold air which then came back up the coast to pound us as snowy nor'easters all winter.

Osgood said to be grateful you don't live around the Great Lakes where cold air picks up moisture from the relatively warm water and drops more than 100 inches of snow on cities like Buffalo and Syracuse, N.Y. every winter.

Pat Stats

Served since Feb. 2, 2003
3,758 passengers - 1,129 aircraft
13,754,086 pounds of cargo
Info from MSgt. Jim Garrity, 42APS

Meals

5,988 hot - 4,261 box lunches
Info from TSgt. David Beauregard, 439SVS

Fuel since Feb. 1

6,658,999 gallons of JP-8
Info from Jim Maloney, fuels

PATRIOT express

Contact us:
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439patriot.editor@westover.af.mil

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Express-ions



- ☒ Chicopee public schools stand behind war effort (back page)
- ☒ Girl Scouts donate summer sessions (back page)
- ☒ Holy Week religious schedule (left sidebar)

We get around

More than 75 members of the Patriot Wing, not counting aircrews, are serving at deployed locations in the United States and overseas in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

We are serving in eight foreign countries and the United States. Most of those deployed overseas are medical and security specialists.

Holy Week Religious Service Scheduled

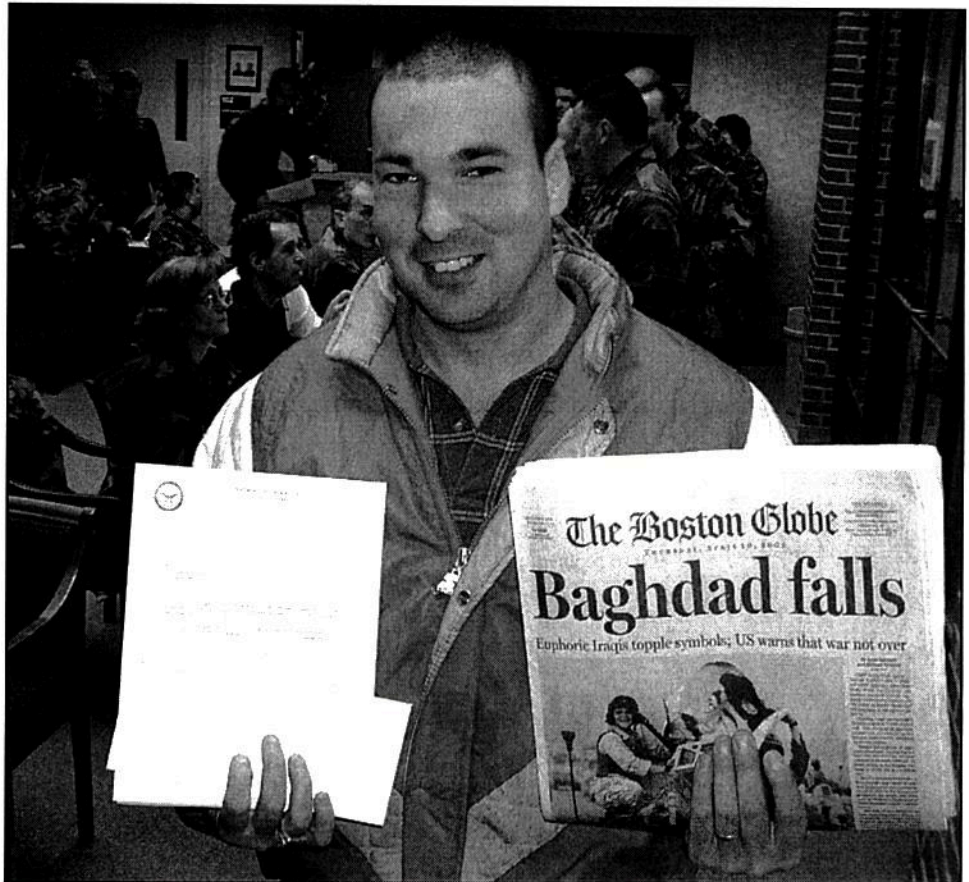
Wednesday, April 16, 2003 -
Chapel Center - Protestant Holy Week Communion Service, 11:30 a.m.

Friday, April 18, 2003 -
Chapel Center - Good Friday of the Lord's Passion Catholic Service - 11:30 a.m. St. Rose De Lima Roman Catholic Church, 600 Grattan St, Aldenville, Stations of the Cross, 3 p.m. and 7 p.m.

Saturday, April 19, 2003 -
Holy Saturday St. Rose De Lima Roman Catholic Church, 600 Grattan St. Aldenville, 8 p.m., Easter Vigil Mass The Chapel Center will be closed.

Easter Sunday, April 20, 2003 -
Pax Terminal - Hangar Three - Protestant Easter Service, 9 a.m.
Chapel Center - Protestant Easter Service, 11 a.m.
St. Rose De Lima Roman Catholic Church, 600 Grattan St. Aldenville, Easter Sunday Mass, 9 a.m., 11 a.m. and 4 p.m.
—St. Rose De Lima Church in Aldenville is also offering a weekday Holy Week Mass at 7 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.
—The Chapel Center will be open every weekday between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. for silent prayer or meditation.
—For those needing directions to St. Rose De Lima Church or for more information, please call MSgt. Robert J. Kazalski at the Chapel Center at Ext. 3031.

First security forces deactivated



SSgt. Chris Dion shows off his deactivation papers and an Iraqi Freedom souvenir as the first security forces member through the demobilization line last Friday. —photo by MSgt. W.C. Pope

by MSgt. Tom Allocco

Days after M-1 tanks rolled into Baghdad, Westover marked a second milestone in the war on terrorism with the first deactivation of security forces.

Last Friday a demobilization line was set up for 25 members of the 439th Security Forces Squadron who were activated in the aftermath of 9/11. About 20 more members are expected to be deactivated in early May.

Brig. Gen. Martin M. Mazick, 439th AW commander, addressed the security specialists as they started the demobilization process. No one at Westover, he said, paid a bigger mobilization price.

"I can't overestimate the value of having you here almost two years, creating a safe work environment so we could get the

mission done. Be sure when you get home to thank your families and employers," the wing commander said.

The first security specialist through the demobilization line was SSgt. Chris Dion, who had been in uniform since November, 2001. In the uncertain days after 9/11, he was among those who bolstered security at the gate and reinforced the security patrols on the flightline and along the fence perimeter.

Later, he spent six months at MacDill, AFB, Fla., home of Central Command and Special Operations, where his duties included working with the K-9 program. He had his picture taken with General Tommy Franks, commander of Central Command.

Now he's planning to marry the Florida woman he met at MacDill and transfer to

(continued on next page)

Security... (Continued from page 1)
Homestead AFB, Fla. He leaves the Patriot Wing with good memories.

"One of the reasons I switched from the Army to the Air Force was because I saw the opportunity for activation and a greater role. It's definitely been an interesting year and a half. The deployment to MacDill was a real world situation," he said.

TSgt. Tim Brock was activated just a few weeks after 9/11. He spent the summer of 2002 at Kapaun AS, Germany guarding mobile radar sites supporting Operation Joint Forge Bosnia missions.

He looked forward to returning to his job for the Veterans Administration, Northampton. He knows what a long activation means to those left at home.

"I was proud to serve my country. But, it was difficult not knowing if you were going to be deploying next week, if you were going to war.

"My wife is not from a military background. It was stressful for her not knowing. She kept saying, 'if you've got to go, you've got to go. I support you all the way, but...' It was almost a relief when I went to Germany because at least we knew," he said.

TSgt. Chris Kellam flew Phoenix Raven missions out of a Pakistan Air Force base into Afghanistan from August through December, 2002. He was part of a 13-member 439th SFS squad headed by MSgt. Greg Quill which

flew security missions on C-130s into Bahgram Air Base and the cities of Kandahar, Khost, Herat and Mazar-e-Sharif while they were in on the frontline of the war on terror.

"All the guys who went on the deployment were happy to go to Afghanistan. We felt we did the mission we trained for. There was a sense of fulfillment after 9/11. I think we all wanted to get over there and do our part," Kellam said.

Like others, he agreed that the deployment was toughest on families. He left behind his wife and 10-year-old son. "The first sergeant, MSgt. Dan Major, stayed in contact with our families. That really helped," he said.

SrA. Raymond Harris was working as security forces ART on Sept. 11, 2001. He was sleeping that morning after the midnight shift when his brother called with news that planes had crashed into the World Trade Center. He immediately reported to his squadron.

"A lot of others just came in. There was a sense of pride. They just knew they had to be here when needed, to prove that it's not a one weekend a month job," Harris said.

MSgt. Thomas Gaglione returned to his job as an Essex County Sheriff after serving as NCOIC of Force Protection.

He was among security members who organized a summer picnic for everyone on base and made donations to the Family Support Center. Security specialists were working 12 hour shifts and many were staying on base at night. "The Family Support Center helped a lot of families. When troops were in need, they assisted them," he said.

Gaglione and others said they were leaving with mixed emotions while fellow security specialists are serving here and overseas. "That's the hardest part of being the first group to demobilize," he said.

"The camaraderie of the troops and the morale they displayed are going to be missed because I won't be with them until we join back up on the UTA...the morale stayed strong through everything," Gaglione said, speaking for himself and everyone who wears the blue beret.

Schools salute troops

Public schools in Westover's neighboring city chalked up their support for Operation Iraqi Freedom last week in a letter to President George W. Bush.

"On behalf of the School Committee, administrators and staff of the Chicopee Public Schools I would like to openly offer support for the armed forces fighting in Iraq," wrote superintendent Basan Nembirkow.

He said the schools supports the U.S. military "throughout the world fighting oppression wherever it may occur."

Nembirkow said the schools stood behind Bush as well. "We support you as commander in chief of the Armed Forces in your obligation to secure the rights of the Iraqi people in their pursuit of freedom," he wrote to the president.

"We also support all of our military personnel throughout the world fighting oppression wherever it may occur. We would like to convey our hope that the war in Iraq will end soon and that all military personnel will return home safely," said the school superintendent.

Girl Scouts make donations

The Girl Scouts of the Pioneer Valley would like to donate summer sessions for children who have a parent who is an activated reservist.

The scouts will donate two one-week sessions at day or overnight camp for two girls whose parent is activated and in need of financial assistance. Day camp is offered for 1st through 12th graders, while overnight campers are 2nd through 12th graders. Day camp is offered at Chicopee State Park July 21-25, July 28-Aug. 1, and Aug. 4-8. Overnight camp is available June 28-Aug. 15.

This assistance is being offered to honor Girl Scout Leaders' Day that is being observed on April 22.

Those people interested should contact TSgt. Kim Babin at the family support center at Ext. 3024 or e-mail at kimberly.babin@westover.af.mil.

Pat Stats

Served since Feb. 2, 2003
3,850 passengers - 1,231 aircraft
14,033,188 pounds of cargo
Info from MSgt. Jim Garrity, 42APS

6,594 hot meals served
Box lunches: 4,313
Info from TSgt. David Beauregard, 439SVS

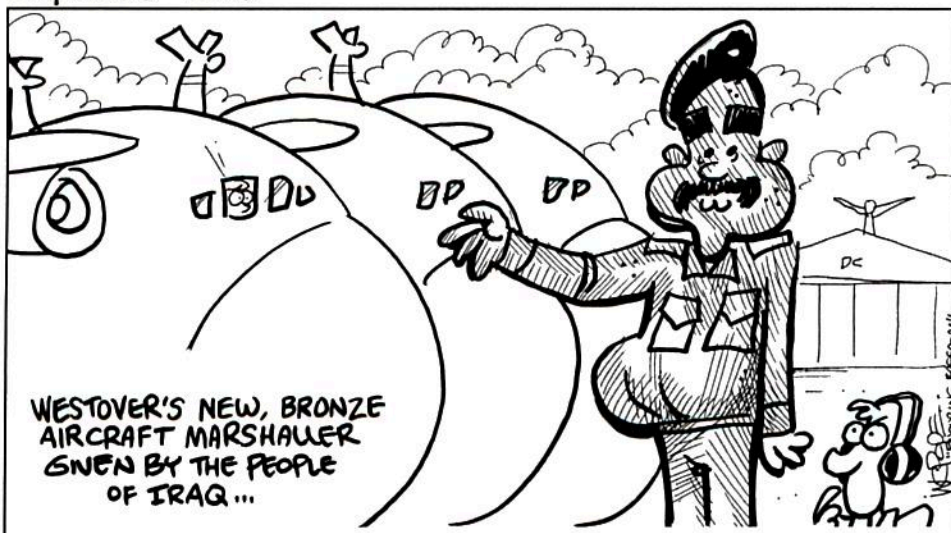
Fuel since Feb. 1
7,191,257 gallons of JP-8
info from Jim Maloney, fuels

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Express-ions



- ✓ **AJ Gontarek has Big Green fever!!! (back page)**
- ✓ **More Patriots called to duty (back page)**
- ✓ **Congressman Neal visits (back page)**
- ✓ **ATOC reports Sunday ETA on inbound Easter Bunny**

Maintainers winning air bridge battle

Article and photo
 by SSgt. Andrew Biscoe

Their "normal" workload is nose-to-tail maintenance of 16 of the Air Force's largest aircraft. These days during Operation Iraqi Freedom, that work is nearly doubled with the surge of C-5s at Westover.

For the crews of the 439th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, the work has just begun when a C-5 aircrew steps out of their three-story high cockpit following a long trip across the Atlantic.

Maintenance vehicles swarm around the armada of C-5s as AMXS men and women inspect the 247-foot-long Galaxy. As if the complexity of the huge aircraft isn't enough, there are the elements to contend with too — starting with an unrelenting and bone-chilling blast of subzero temperatures in February. And the schedule can seem to be even more relentless.

"One'll come down, we'll jump on it," said SSgt. Anthony Gambardella, 439th AMXS crew chief, as he frequently finds himself scrambling from one airlifter to another.

"The next thing you know there's another one, and you get that one ready. It's a constant rotation." Everyone works on whatever Galaxy touches down on the runway — whether it is from Lackland, Dover, Travis, Stewart or here.

Gambardella works four 12-hour day shifts. His day begins at 5:45 a.m. "Then we get our days off and start all over again," he said. He knows the C-5s haul vital supplies anywhere on the earth, and that includes the troops fighting in Iraq. Gambardella believes the long hours and demanding maintenance required for the C-5s are well worth the effort. "We're supporting the troops," he said with a smile. "If I could be over there (in Iraq), I would be."

Last year, Westover maintainers worked the C-5 maintenance air bridge at Moron AB, Spain during three-month rotations. This time around, Gambardella and the more than 300 other men and women with AMXS are home. They work Westover's flight line — the East Coast hub for all C-5s heading across the ocean, and returning. Since Feb. 2, when the 24-hour surge of aircraft began, the flight line is among the busiest of any Air Force flight line in the country. As many as 27 C-5s



SSgt. Blayne Lum, 439th AMXS, checks the instruments of a Travis AFB C-5B.

have lined the ramps that stretch all the way around past the Base Hangar.

"You might hear that there are one or two airplanes coming in and the next minute you got six," said TSgt. Bob Cirillo, an air reserve technician crew chief. "You have to be ready for it. We've been able to turn the airplanes around and still have enough room for more to come in."

The AMXS crews, activated since Feb. 17, see that the C-5 crews have their aircraft ready to go for the next mission. The transports don't always stop for refueling. Every time a C-5 lands or takes off, there is a new inspection sticker. The pilots fly the plane, but the aircraft doesn't fly until it's signed off.

SSgt. Blayne Lum regularly works on C-5A and B models. "You get to learn different models from the A to B, and there's all different kinds of equipment updates that some of these have," he said. "Whatever comes down from Bandit 6 or 7, we're on it."

Lum's "office" is the C-5 cockpit, loaded with a myriad of electronic switches and gauges. He monitors all of the avionics on the C-5s such as autopilot and navigation.

Gambardella sees the biggest reward when a 350-ton C-5 takes to the air. "It's knowing that we did our job the best that we could to get the thing off the ground," he said.

"It takes a lot of hard work and a lot of hours... there's a lot of knowledge out here, and a lot of experienced people. That's what it takes. This is the only place that I know of that when something needs to get done, everybody comes together as a team. They disregard any obstacles. If the job needs to get done, we're going to get it done."

The integration of the Lackland maintainers has been one more example of the success story at Westover, said Lt. Col. Christopher Skomars, 439th MXG deputy commander. "It's a huge success. These folks from Lackland are doing a heck of a job. It's a seamless operation." The statistics tell the story. "We're launching upwards of 15 aircraft per day. They've easily doubled their workload," he said.

CMSgt John Budenas, AMXS first sergeant, said the credit goes right to the troops on the flight line. "They are really out there pushing the mission 24 hours a day," he said.

"They take great pride in what they do. They're in the frigid cold and rain and sleet. I am really proud to serve with those folks. Westover maintenance puts the spear in the air. Without us the tip of the spear wouldn't hit the target in Iraq. They do it because they

(continued on next page)

439th AW MISSION: Actively support national objectives on a global scale with ready, mobility forces

Maintainers... (Continued from page 1)

take pride in their work," the first shirt said.

MSgt. Charles Keller, a C-5 crew chief since 1986, is among 160 maintainers deployed here for six months from the 433rd AW, Lackland AFB. "It's better here than it is downrange," Keller said, adding that many of the 433rd crews are working in Moron and Rota Spain, handling the C-5 maintenance on the other end of the world.

Cirillo looked out at the flight line during an unexpected pause in the action on Tuesday. "It's kind of a little relief," he said. "We're still going to be in this awhile."

And as long as they are doing so, the effort continues to catch the attention of those people in charge at Air Mobility Command at Scott AFB, Ill. Skomars said the Westover maintainers have earned praise from the highest levels of the headquarters staff on down.



PATRIOTS BOOST CELTICS — AJ Gontarek, son of club manager Kevin Gontarek (left), shows his fan support going to the Celtics-Pistons game Wednesday. Eight busloads of Westover hoop fans received free tickets to see the Celtics win 99-92.

PATRIOT *express*

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Aerial porters, 15 others called to duty

by MSgt. Tom Allocco

Another 55 Reservists, most of them members of the 42nd Aerial Port Squadron, were called to active duty on Tuesday.

An MPF mobilization line in the Dining Facility processed 40 aerial porters, 11 members of the 439th Communications Squadron, two members of Wing Safety and one each in the Military Personnel Flight and Family Support Center.

The communications specialists called to active duty include members assigned to computer support, communications security and runway communications support.

Almost all of the activated 42nd APS aerial porters had previously served at least two months on days in support of 24-hour operations since the start of the Enduring Freedom surge in February. They include the full gamut of aerial port specialties to keep C-5s, equipment and troops moving, including members to support loading operations, ATOC, passenger services and fleet services.

Lt. Col. James Carey, 42nd APS commander, expressed confidence in the ability of his aerial porters to carry on the grueling air bridge mission. "We've been here 60 days. We know what's going on. We're ready for anything they throw at us," he said.

Among the activated aerial porters was TSgt. Philip Nadeau who is employed as a manufacturing engineer at V.S. Tsubaki, Chicopee.

During Desert Shield and Desert Storm he served here nine months with the 42nd Red Hats. From last June through September he was with 21 other aerial porters at Al Udeid AB, Qatar.

Nadeau will serve as the aerial port liaison to the Command Post. He volunteered for activation, he said, "to protect the country, to keep my 22 nieces and nephews free."

MSgt. Tim Williams had been serving as NCOIC of Passenger Services since the first day of the surge. A Delta Airlines senior

customer services agent, he served here nine months during Desert Shield and Desert Storm. He also served with the aerial porters at Al Udeid last year.

The aerial porters, Williams said, will continue to do what they have been doing.

"That's the reason we wear the uniform, to do the job. And we have the opportunity to do the job," he said.

Congressman Neal visits

Bay State Congressman Richard Neal (D-Springfield) visited Westover on April 15. Brig. Gen. Martin M. Mazick, 439th AW commander, hosted the congressman's visit.

Mazick, the group commanders and the Command Chief Master Sergeant Jeffrey B. Sherwin briefed Neal on Westover's role in Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom. The congressman also heard about the impact of the mobilization on Westover reservists.

Mazick took Neal on a tour of Hangar 3, where Neal met USO volunteers and reservists in the passenger terminal. Neal also received a 42nd APS red squadron hat from Lt. Col. James Carey, 42nd APS commander.

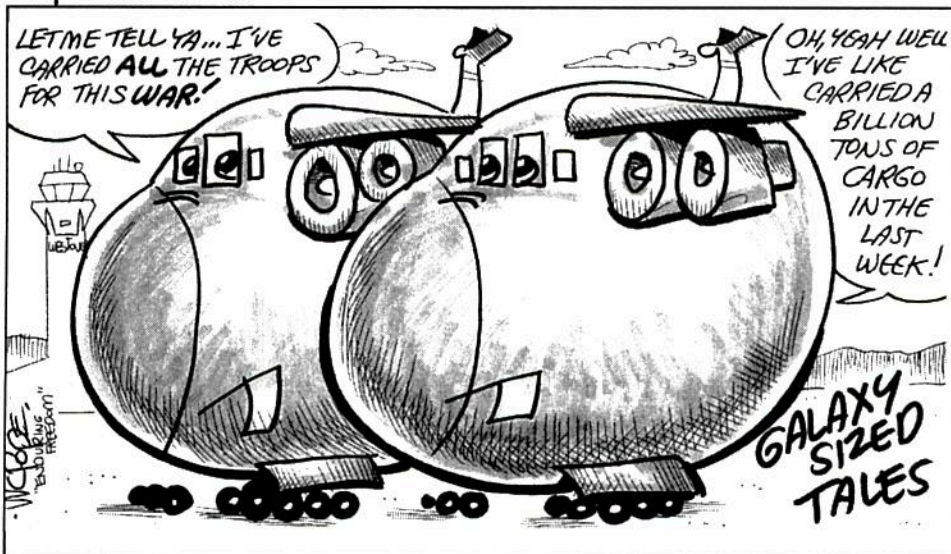
Pat Stats

Served since Feb. 2, 2003
3,894 passengers - 1,308 aircraft
14,132,933 pounds of cargo
Info from MSgt. Jim Garrity, 42APS

Meals
7,014 hot meals served
Box lunches: 4,345
Info from TSgt. David Beauregard, 439SVS

Fuel since Feb. 1
7,669,618 gallons of JP-8
Info from Jim Maloney, Fuels

Expressions



PATRIOT *express*

439th Airlift Wing
Westover ARB, Mass
April 22, 2003 #17

- ☑ "Y" offers family fun day (back page)
- ☑ Community donates Easter baskets (back page)
- ☑ 4,000-plus passengers through Westover
- ☑ No more snow pictures! (back page)

Welcome back, heroes!



A big hug from a USO volunteer says welcome home for one of the 49th FW airmen who were greeted with a red carpet celebration upon their return to American soil.

by MSgt. Tom Allocco
Photos by MSgt. W.C. Pope

The airmen who supported the first strike of Operation Iraqi Freedom were the first returning troops to land at Westover last Saturday. They came home with lifelong bragging rights that they serviced the F-117s that delivered the four GBU 27 2,000-pound bombs on a Saddam bunker on the opening night of the campaign to liberate the Iraqi people.

The 73 airmen experienced a welcome fit for heroes when they touched American soil at Westover. The Patriot Wing spoke for all America when it cheered the 49th FW munitions systems and maintenance specialists who arrived here after a stop at Rota, Spain on their long flight from their F-117 air base in the AOR to Holloman AFB, N.M.

Brig. Gen. Martin M. Mazick, wing commander, stood at the C-5, shook hands and repeated 73 times, "Welcome back!"

Outside the bunting-draped passenger terminal they were welcomed by a cheering

group that ranged from World War II veterans to scampering children of Patriot Wing members. Lee Greenwood's "Proud to be an American" from a tape player sounded the theme as USO members handed each airman a small American flag. Inside, there were sandwiches, cake, treats and, most important, calling cards to tell families that after three months overseas that America had just welcomed them home.

Unit pride was on the mind of F-117 crew chief SrA. Fernando Vasquez of Texas. "I'm part of the squadron that went out first, had the first strike of this war. It's kind of admirable that we were picked first, to take out a target that first night," he said.

For TSgt. Tom Osborn of Ohio, it was his third "welcome home" to America, having returned from Desert Storm in 1991 and then hearing the welcome home music in 1999 after Allied Force in Kosovo.

"It's awesome. A lot of these youngsters need to remember that there's people at home like the group here," he said of the welcome.

The heroes' welcome was the closing of a circle for SSgt. Robert Duke of Georgia. Twelve years earlier he had been a high school teen cheering the 82nd Airborne when they came home to Fort Benning. Now the F-117 avionics specialist was on the other side of the

(continued on next page)



Brig. Gen. Martin M. Mazick greets TSgt. Tom Osborn, the first airman off the first plane bringing troops back to Westover from Iraqi Freedom.

Stealth airman bags a premier souvenir



SrA. Stephen Palermi

A simple red banner carried in his breast pocket is the proud souvenir of SrA. Stephen Palermi of Oregon, one of the F-117 munitions systems specialists who stopped here Saturday. Talking in the passenger terminal, he pulled from his pocket a "safe and arm" flag. The flag is from the seeker head of one of the first four GBU 27 2,000-pound bombs dropped by two F-117s on a Saddam bunker on the first night of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Palermi was one of three munitions systems specialists who delivered the four bombs on two trailers to the F-117s that night. They weren't told what the mission was, but they knew it was something special when they were alerted about midnight and told to keep radio silence.

As soon as Palermi pulled the flag out of his pocket in the passenger terminal he became a celebrity for Boston and Springfield TV cameras.

"My dad is a former Air Force pilot and he thought it was pretty cool," he said of the Iraqi Freedom souvenir.

Palermi plans to frame the flag and keep it as a family heirloom and memento of something important.

"Being part of a group that liberated a country is an amazing thing. I was eating at the club. I saw that statue being pulled down. Amazing," he said.

"I'm just happy to be back in the States," he said.

"My wife and mom and dad want me home. I'm trying my best," he said.

439th AW MISSION: Actively support national objectives on a global scale with ready, mobility forces

Welcome... (Continued from page 1)

welcoming line. Holding a small American flag, he recounted 110 degree heat and a blinding sandstorm that ripped out tent pegs and brought his 76-member tent down around his head.

Among those greeting the troops was Bill Murray of Chicopee. In July, he will mark the 60th anniversary of being hit in the arm and chest as a 1st Infantry Division soldier in North Africa. Erwin Belorusky of East Longmeadow served with the 14th Air Force as a machinist in China and came back to serve in Iceland during the Korean War. "It's just great seeing the guys coming home," he said.

"You did a wonderful job," a USO volunteer told TSgt. Kathy Riley of New Mexico, a supply NCOIC. Riley was with her squadron on the flightline on the first night when the two returning F-117 pilots came across on a flyby and landed. "When they raised their canopies, everyone cheered."

Another memory is sitting in the mess tent watching TV as a Saddam statue toppled.

Between those two events "we liberated a lot of people who were living in fear. These people don't have to live in torment. I think our being a first strike unit made a difference," she said.

"We think we accomplished the mission," she said.

Family Fun Day

A free Family Fun Day will be held on Friday, April 25 at the Hampshire Regional YMCA in Northampton.

The event begins with a pizza dinner at 6 p.m., followed by a "Mad Science" show from 6:45-7:30 p.m. The evening wraps up with activities including swimming, basketball, and air hockey from 7:30-9:30 p.m.

The free dinner and show are being donated by local businesses to support the families of military men and women.

Reservations are required by calling (413) 584-7086.



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PATRIOT FLOWER POWER--

An early and much welcomed sign of spring at Westover is a flowering magnolia which frames a C-5 tail. The tree stands next to the Wing Headquarters building.

—photo by MSgt. W.C.Pope

Pat Stats

Served since Feb. 2, 2003
4,010 passengers - 1,365 aircraft
14,501,866 pounds of cargo
Info from TSgt. Kevin Nee, 42APS

Meals

7,543 hot meals served
Box lunches: 4,423
Info from TSgt. David Beauregard, 439SVS

Fuel since Feb. 1

8,013,531 gallons of JP-8
Info from Jim Maloney, Fuels

USO Easter baskets add cheer to holiday

More than 50 military families enjoyed a more bountiful Easter celebration after receiving holiday food baskets from the Pioneer Valley USO food pantry in Building 1100. Children also received candy baskets to make Easter a more festive occasion.

Each family Easter food baskets included a ham or turkey donated by community groups.

Those who donated included St. Luke's Greek Orthodox Church, East Longmeadow, Chicopee Kiwanis and Rotary members and employees of the Northern Correctional Facility in Sommers, Conn.

Mt. Holyoke College donated Easter candy for the children.

Express-ions



- ☑ Westover safety chief receives OSHA award (back page)
- ☑ ALCF set to deploy to Southwest Asia (back page)
- ☑ 998 Wing reservists now activated

Hours of operation

Flyers Inn

Lodging desk 24/7
Commercial 413-593-5421
DSN: 589-2700/base Ext. 2700

Chapel Center

Chaplain available 24/7
Pager: 413-785-3195, base Ext. 3031

Fitness Center

Monday-Friday, 5:30 a.m.-8 p.m.
Saturday (non-UTA), 9 a.m.-3 p.m.
Sunday (non-UTA), closed
UTA Saturdays, 8 a.m.-8 p.m.
UTA Sundays, 8 a.m.-4 p.m.

Bowling Center

Monday-Friday lunch and bowling,
11 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

Westover Consolidated Club

Breakfast: 6-8 a.m. until Thursday
lunch, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.
dinner, 5-8 p.m.

Westover Dining Facility

Breakfast, daily, 5-8 a.m.,
\$1.60 for those on per diem,
UTA status - free
Midnight meals, 11 p.m.-1 a.m.
boxed meals provided daily

Family Support Center

Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-4 p.m.
Saturday and Sunday of A UTA,
9 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
Saturday of B UTA, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
closed Sunday of B UTA

Legal Office

Monday-Friday 7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Base Exchange

Monday-Saturday 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
Sunday 11 a.m.-5 p.m.

Shoppette

Monday-Saturday 8 a.m.-7:30 p.m.
Sunday 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

Barber Shop (next to BX)

Tuesday-Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
Saturday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.
closed Sundays

Daily Base Shuttle

Every 15 minutes at meal times to the club, dining facility, Hangar Avenue, supply, and bowling center.

AES at home in Kurdish village

by MSgt. Tom Allocco

Two Westover medical specialists are winning the hearts of the Kurdish people of northern Iraq while serving as a medical liaison team for Army troops.

Tea with village officials and negotiations for the services of interpreters are part of the life of Capt. Cal, a medical services coordinator, and Capt. Mark, a flight nurse.

The two 439th AES officers are serving in the homeland of the Kurds in northern Iraq where they are acting as a liaison team for aeromedical evacuation. Their job is to move wounded or injured troops out of the AOR to areas where they can receive more complete medical care. They have been in northern Iraq since late March.

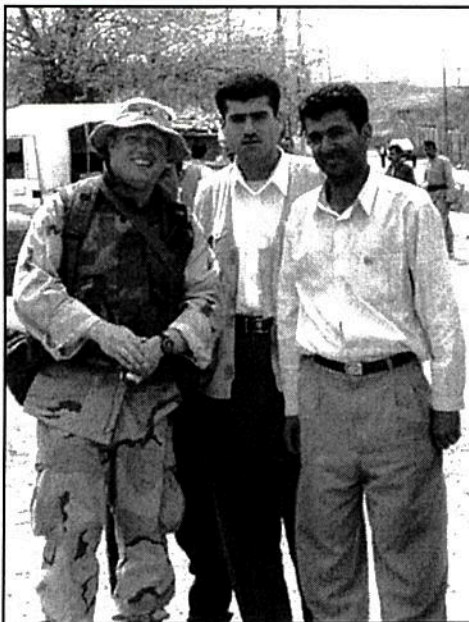
"The local Kurdish people love us. They said they would like to become the 51st U.S. state," Capt. Cal wrote in a recent e-mail to Command CMSgt. Jeffrey Sherwin.

"I had an official visit with the village mayor to try to find interpreters to help at our entry control points. We had tea in his village office," he wrote. He also negotiated with the Kurds for bulk water.

Capt. Cal described their arrival in another e-mail transmitted to the Command



Capt. Cal has his picture taken with a member of a Kurdish village council following negotiations for the services of interpreters.



Capt. Mark poses with some of the Kurds with whom Americans have built rapport in recent weeks.

Chief by cell phone hooked up to a lap top.

"Our job was to support Army troops who jumped into Iraq from C-17s and secured a very remote airfield a couple of days earlier. They were fortunate to have minimum injuries, but still needed long-term aeromedical evacuation. At the last minute, on the last flight into our area, the flight nurse and myself filled the last two open seats on a C-17. We could only bring one bag and an iridium cell phone. Nothing else. If we couldn't carry it, we had to leave it behind, including the rest of our team and all our equipment," Capt. Cal wrote.

They had been in a country near the Iraq border before moving to Aviano, Italy, in anticipation of deploying to Iraq. Left behind in Aviano were radio operators TSgt. Paul and SSgt. Kenneth.

More than three weeks after Capt. Cal wrote the e-mail note, the two radio operators were still in Aviano and the two medical officers were living day to day with one spare uniform and what they had been able to carry in-country.

"The first night we arrived Mark and I

(continued on next page)

Kurds... (Continued from page 1)

slept on the floor of the forward surgical team patient holding tent. After that, we borrowed two cots and found a tent we could share with eight other people. The tents are small, so the cots almost touch each other," Capt. Cal wrote.

"There's not much where we are now. No latrines, no showers, no laundry and just MREs with water. We also don't have much for personal supplies. I've since learned what we really need to survive, and that's many years of good training with the 439th AES and others at Westover ARB. We've been able to do our job with just that, a cell phone and a couple of borrowed cots," he wrote.

On April 18, Capt. Cal wrote: "We moved one urgent patient last night, three patients the night before, and two the night before that... we've moved patients nearly every day with the little we have."

Three days later he wrote: "We've had two casualties from hostile fire, and all the rest have been injuries. The worst thing is the rain. It rains every two or three days, and everything gets covered in mud. You get about two inches of mud stuck to the bottom of your boots, just from walking 10 feet.

"We had a small stream of water flowing through our tent. Even with sandbags and trenches, there's just no way to stop the water."

Capt. Cal concluded an e-mail to Chief Sherwin with advice based on his hard experience.

"Please let others know that the most important survival asset is good training and complete notes. Anything else is just 'frosting on the cake,'" Capt. Cal wrote.

Search and rescue training will be held next Wednesday

Search and rescue training is available on Wednesday, April 30 for those volunteers interested. The training, which lasts about three hours, begins at 9 a.m. in the fitness center. For more information, call Ext. 3958.



(EDITOR'S NOTE: Security guidelines prohibit using last names of deploying reservists.)

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Westover safety chief receives OSHA award

by SSgt. Andrew Biscoe

Officials from the U.S. government's safety arm came to Westover on April 16 to present the wing chief of safety a plaque during the wing leadership staff meeting.

Representatives from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration in Boston presented the award to Lt. Col. Dave Moore as Brig. Gen. Martin M. Mazick, 439th AW commander, looked on.

The award recognized Moore's collaboration with OSHA for two safety seminars held on base in January and in January 2001.

"Your efforts bring great credit to yourself and the men and women of Westover Air Reserve Base," said Marthe B. Kent, regional administrator for OSHA.

This past winter's general industry seminar, held in Hangar 3, featured props and live situations that portrayed the potential dangers of working in high places. Maintenance workers at Westover often rise six stories into the air to work on the towering tails of the C-5s.

"It covered fall protection, electrical safety, ladder and crane safety, lockout and

tagout programs, and material handling equipment," Moore said. "There were hands-on displays. It was pretty nice."

Moore credited the leadership of the 42nd APS with making the event happen in January. Squadron Commander Lt. Col. Jim Carey and CMSgt. Bruce Westcott, 42nd APS operations superintendent, quickly made the hangar available after Moore learned that the Base Hangar could not be used due to interior remodeling.

Moore was honored by the attendance of the OSHA leadership who made the two-hour drive. "It was pretty nice they saw fit to come all the way from Boston," he said. Moore is a command pilot with nearly 7,500 hours of flying numerous military aircraft including T-29s, C-123s, C-130s and C-5s. He has been chief of safety since April 1997.

ALCF going to Iraq

by SSgt. Andrew Biscoe

Eleven members of the 439th Airlift Control Flight will deploy to Iraq to run airlift operations at an airport now occupied by American forces.

Lt. Col. James, ALCF commander, said his unit will be in charge of all cargo movement and processing of passengers at the airport. "We'll be the TALCE (tanker airlift control element) for that particular region," he said.

The flight commander said five members of the ALCF from the 315th AW, a reserve unit at Charleston AFB, S.C., will join the Westover reservists for the mission that is supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom. Having been activated on March 2, James said he and the troops are glad the waiting for the deployment orders is over.

"They're excited, they're ready to go," he said. "We're chomping at the bit."

The airlift control specialists will deploy directly from Westover. They may be overseas as long as four months.

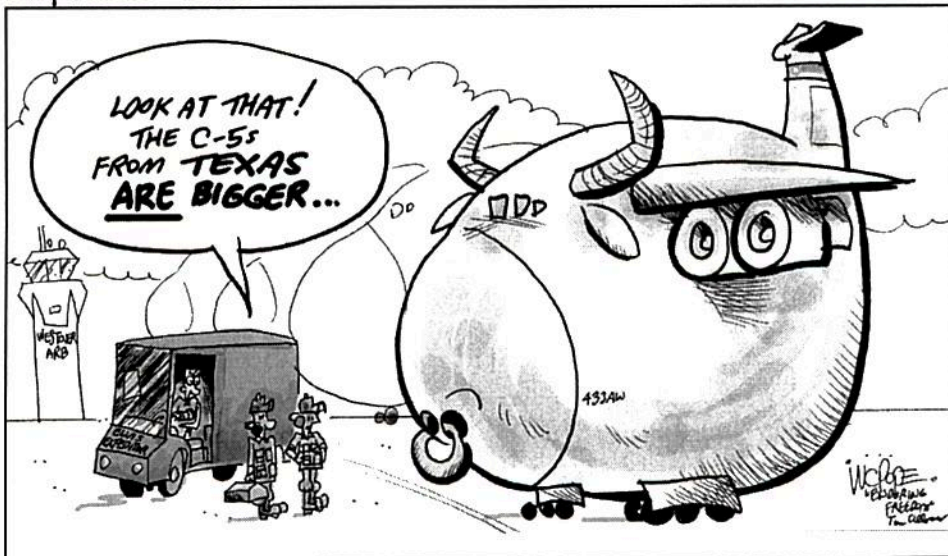
Pat Stats

Served since Feb. 2, 2003
4,046 passengers - 1,408 aircraft
14,694,208 pounds of cargo
Info from MSgt. Jim Garrity, 42APS

Meals
7,958 hot meals served
Box lunches: 4,431
Info from TSgt. David Beauregard, 439SVS

Fuel since Feb. 1
8,372,796 gallons of JP-8
Info from Jim Maloney, Fuels

Express-ions



- ✓ Air Guards' 187th AW brings back perfect score (back page)
- ✓ F-15 Gorillas still making history (back page)
- ✓ Miss USA visits Westover (photo below)

Expediter keep 'em moving from chock-in to take-off



FLIGHTLINE POINTMAN – Maintenance expeditor MSgt. Ron Sliwa monitors the progress of maintenance of C-5s during a 12-hour shift on the flightline in Bandit 7 helping to assure that aircraft are turned around to be fully mission capable in a timely and efficient manner.
—photo by MSgt. Tom Allocco

by MSgt. Tom Allocco

Every hour, every day Raiders and Bandits prowls the flightline looking for trouble.

They're the four maintenance trucks, Red Raider 6 and 7 and Blue Bandit 6 and 7, with senior NCO expeditors behind the wheel, delivering maintenance specialists to airplanes, picking up spare parts and moving equipment. Most importantly, they're always looking for problems and bottlenecks, trying to resolve existing ones and avoid new ones.

The expeditors of the 439 Aircraft Maintenance Squadron don't fly the airplanes and they don't normally fix them. But the expeditors earn their pay by making all the connections so when a C-5 lands here, it will leave Westover ready to fly fully mission capable in a timely and efficient manner.

Life for an expeditor on the flightline is a 12-hour shift that can easily stretch into 13 hours or more. On a recent rainy day, MSgt. Ron Sliwa was the expeditor driving the Bandit 7 maintenance truck up and down the flightline, responsible for turning around five Galaxies. He's had as many as eight since the surge.

With a grip on his "brick" radio and his ear tilted to a second radio and a cell phone

in his truck, Sliwa was like someone at the center of a storm.

Working the radios, he requested a nitro pumper for North 3, asked Dispatch how much fuel they wanted for another plane, took instructions for 230,000 pounds of JP-8 for the C-5 and dropped off maintainers to do the fueling, dropped his radio next to him, grabbed his clip board stuffed with status notes on his five aircraft and proceeded back to the hydraulics shop to pick up parts for another crew to replace a hydraulic pump. It was early in the day. It looked like the rain would keep going all day and it looked to Sliwa like another long day on the flightline.

"You don't know what's going to happen from minute to minute," he said.

Outside the hydraulics shop a crew waited while he ran inside to check on parts. MSgt. Michael Conboy, an electrical specialist, eyed the cold rain and mused about the life of a maintainer.

"If you catch an outside job on a day like this it's not very pleasant. The first few hours you try not to get wet, the next few hours you're soaking wet and it doesn't matter anymore," he said.

Returning to the truck, the Bandit 7 expeditor drops off a crew chief for a home station check, a detailed inspection of an aircraft. "Go get 'em, Matt," he tells him. Over

his shoulder he swaps irreverent banter with the maintainers in the back of the truck. The give and take masks the seriousness of life on the flightline.

Sliwa knows that ultimately it is the 439th AMXS expeditor who will sign his name to the ER (exceptional release) which affirms that the maintainers have made the C-5 safe for flight before it is turned over to the aircrew.

The challenge starts when the maintainers taxi the plane into its parking spot. "It's pretty much a mystery when it's chocked in," Sliwa said.

A C-5 landing here after downrange missions typically has built up a number of small maintenance problems which degrades its mission capability. The maintainers have to find them and fix them to make the aircraft fully mission capable, said SMSgt. Joseph DiMartino, production supervisor.

Turning a plane around starts with a post flight inspection and a debriefing of the crew

(continued on next page)

An All-American welcome when Miss USA visits troops



Miss USA, Susie Castillo, accepts a 439th AMXS coin and squadron t-shirt from SSgt. Kara Davis during a visit to Westover on Monday. While here, Miss USA greeted Iraqi Freedom troops in the passenger terminal where she autographed photos.
—photo by MSgt. W.C. Pope

Expediter... (Cont. from page 1)

by the expediter. Not every plane can be turned around in a few hours. The expediter has to make the call on priorities and decide when crews have to be pulled off one plane for another job. Sometimes they have to say "no" to verifying the air worthiness of an aircraft.

"When they call for an ERI have to know the aircraft is ready," Sliwa said.

"On time take-off is a point of pride. But mission reliability is a bigger point of pride," DiMartino said.

"A plane might take off and get to its destination, but if it breaks on the first leg of the mission it doesn't do any good. We strive for the highest on-time take-off rate in AMC, but Westover also has a reputation throughout the system for mission reliability. We're lucky, we have a highly experienced, self-motivated group of people who pay attention to detail. They want to get the plane off the ground, they want the mission to succeed," DiMartino said.

The job gets done because Red Raiders and Blue Bandits prowl the flightline. "A plane takes off and they'll send another," Sliwa said. He didn't have long to wait for his next call from Job Control or a crew chief.

Pat Stats

Served since Feb. 2, 2003

4,301 passengers - 1,482 aircraft

15,046,308 pounds of cargo

Info from MSgt. Jim Garrity, 42APS

Meals

8,590 hot meals served

Box lunches: 4,488

Info from TSgt. David Beauregard, 439SVS

Fuel since Feb. 1

8,708,254 gallons of JP-8

Info from Jim Maloney, Fuels



(EDITOR'S NOTE: Security guidelines prohibit using last names of deploying reservists.)

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F-15 Gorillas still making history

by MSgt. Tom Allocco

The "Gorillas" came home from Iraqi Freedom by way of the Westover Passenger Terminal last week.

Maintainers and several pilots of the 58th Fighter Squadron of Eglin AFB, Fla. who proudly wear the snarling, menacing gorilla on their unit patch experienced the "Westover Welcome." They arrived tired after two days on the road, including a stop-over in Rota, Spain. But the hamburgers and hotdogs were already grilling before they made their first calls home from American soil. Home-made carrot cake from USO helped say "welcome back."

Among those returning home were Capt. Joel Hemphill of Ohio. Call sign Deuce, he wore the Gorilla patch on his shoulder.

The gorilla nickname comes from the guerilla warfare-like tactics the 58th used in the Mediterranean Theater in World War II when they flew the P-40 Warhawk, P-47 Thunderbolt and P-38 Lightning.

During the Vietnam War, flying F-4 Phantoms, the 58th Fighter Squadron lived up to the boast of their unofficial motto "Kill MiGs". The Gorillas proved their dogfighting skills, including shooting down a MiG-19 with a 300-round burst from a Vulcan cannon.

The aggressive 58th motto evolved into "Kill More MiGs" after the squadron claimed a MiG-29 as the first aerial kill of Desert Storm. The squadron's F-15 pilots destroyed 16 enemy aircraft, including 5 MiG-29s, and had the most air-to-air kills in Desert Storm.

The Gorillas made a different kind of history in the Iraqi Freedom air war.

"There were (Iraqi) airplanes. They just decided not to fly them. It's the first time in history a country at war decided not to use their airplanes. I guess it's quite a compliment to U.S. airpower," Hemphill said.



The 58th Fighter Squadron was in the AOR as air operations stepped up from Southern Watch to Iraqi Freedom.

The squadron flew sorties every day during 24-hour operations to protect high value assets that including AWACS, tanker, Rivet Joints and J-Stars missions and escorted all the strikers.

Ironically, although they were on the front lines of the war, they were too busy fighting it from a desert air base to closely observe it. "CNN had more coverage... people in the States had a better idea of what was going on," he said.

Life in the Iraqi Freedom AOR, "makes you appreciate a lot of things... running water, trees, grass.

"We're definitely proud to be part of it. We're thankful it was over quick. Mostly thankful to be home," the F-15 pilot said.

Air Guards' 187th AW brings back perfect score

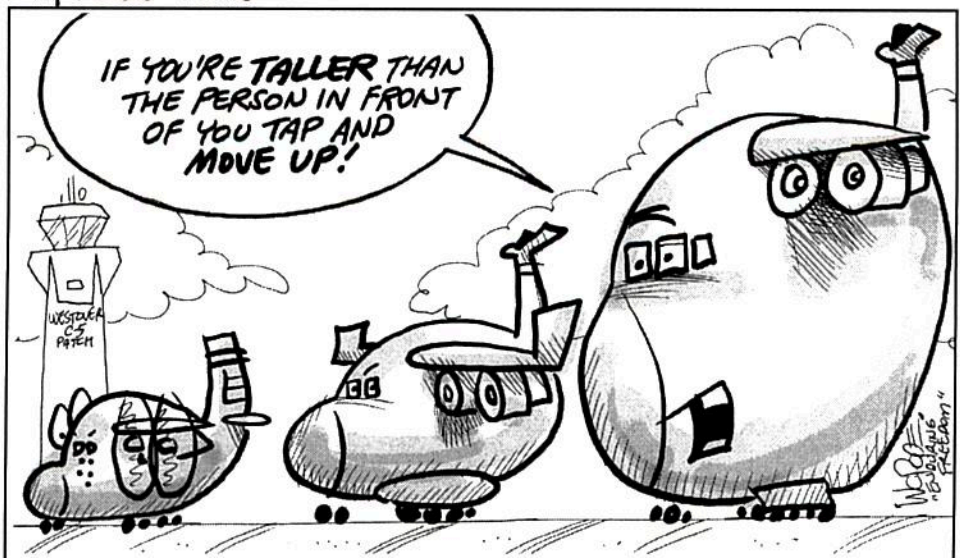
A one hundred percent performance is the score SMSgt. Walter Markley give his Alabama Air National Guard airmen coming home from Iraqi Freedom. They were welcomed here Monday.

The maintainers and civil engineers from Montgomery, Ala. supported F-16 operations. "We didn't lose a single person or have a serious injury. And we never had a mission cancelled for maintenance. I call that a perfect mission," Markley said.

The Alabamans' civil engineers started the desert base from scratch in January, including setting up two power plants.

Markley estimates that the 410th AEW to which the guardsmen were attached flew at least 3,000 sorties. Their main mission was hunting Scud launchers. The 410th shared the desert base with a unit of Royal Air Force Harriers which flew Iraqi Freedom missions.

Express-ions



- ☑ Mexico's Cinco de Mayo is now an all-American fest (back page)
- ☑ 439th AES making its mark! (back page)
- ☑ All back issues of the Patriot and Express can be downloaded from www.afrc.af.mil/439aw

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\$3.25 for midnight/box
for those on per diem
Ext. 2026/3523

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Saturday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.
closed Sundays & Mondays

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Every 15 minutes at meal times to the
club, dining facility, Hangar Avenue,
supply, and bowling center.

Safety aims for zero flight mishaps



Lt. Col. David Moore on safety patrol at Westover. -- photo by MSgt. Tom Allocco

by MSgt. Tom Allocco

A 247-foot long C-5 Galaxy, built to carry 50,000 gallons of JP-8 and a quarter million pounds of cargo, will always have a potential for mishap, whether in the air or on the ground. It's a tribute to every Patriot Wing member that Westover has not experienced a Class A mishap in almost three decades, since major damage to a C-123.

For Lt. Col. David Moore, Wing Chief of Safety, the job of keeping up that record of safety was a tough one when it mostly focused on our own 16 Galaxies. Since the start of the surge reservists and civilians of his Wing Safety Office have had to work around the clock to keep safety priority number while as many as 27 aircraft are parked here at one time.

"Since the surge, we've increased coverage. Everything is multiplied," Moore said. "There's a greater potential for mishaps because there is more flying, there are more aircraft here and more people on the flightline. We've had no major mishaps despite a very busy schedule," he said.

ORM (Operational Risk Management) is a mainstay for Moore and his safety team. At its most simple, ORM means a proactive attitude, identification of risks and making timely decisions in response to hazards associated with those risks.

Moore hopes that ORM will take the Air

Force forward another step in the revolutionary progress of flying safety.

"In 1922," he said, "the overall flying Class A mishap rate was 522 per 100,000 flying hours. Today the Air Force has a rate of about 1.5. In World War II, for every plane lost in combat, three were lost in mishaps," the safety officer said.

Flying safety records continued to improve until about 1990, when the mishap rate reached a plateau of about 1.5 per 100,000 flying hours. Those in the safety business are not willing to settle for a Class A mishap rate of 1.5.

"A mishap is a failure. Theoretically, every mishap could have been prevented. Something went wrong somewhere. Someone may have done something or failed to do something. Maybe they failed to follow technical orders or were in a hurry.

"I feel ORM can drive the mishap rate all the way to zero. We will stop at nothing to get to zero and still accomplish the mission," Moore said.

The Wing Safety Office's mission starts with education. "Safety is a state of mind. Attitude and discipline needs to be constantly reinforced by education. You have to impress upon everyone involved with the airplane, follow your training, don't cut corners," Moore said.

"In safety, we say that if things go

(continued on next page)

Safety... (Cont. from page 1)

perfectly with education, we don't have to do investigation of mishaps," he said.

In the history of safety, the name Lt. Cal Rogers is significant. In 1912, he was the first airman killed by a bird strike when a gull became entangled in his flight controls while doing aerial acrobatics at Long Beach, Calif.

"The threat of bird strikes continues to be a way of life for all pilots," Moore said. The problem at Westover is compounded by the fact that the base encompasses one of the largest grasslands in New England and can be in the path of migratory geese and ducks.

In an example of the problem, a strike by a turkey vulture put a gaping hole in the fuel pod of a Marine Corps C-130 here last year.

The Safety Office conducts an aggressive flight safety program in cooperation with Massachusetts endangered species experts. A U.S. Department of Agriculture biologist is on base daily to assist in the effort to control birds. Sometimes simple solutions, like cutting tall grass in which birds hide from predators or draining standing water, help prevent bird strikes, Moore said.

With 7,500 flying hours since 1971, Moore has an ingrained faith in the payback of aggressive safety efforts.

"We fly heavy aircraft in all weather under adverse conditions at times. Through ORM we can do it safely and still get the mission done," he said.

"Half of the safety program is learning how to prevent mishaps. The Air Force spends a lot of money to investigate every single mishap and the chain of events leading up to it. That's because we believe it's better to learn from others' misfortunes and mistakes.

"I believe the Safety Office can make a difference. I just don't want anyone to get hurt and don't want taxpayers' precious resources to be squandered by preventable mishaps. If we inculcate the lessons learned into our folks, we can drive the mishap rate down to zero," Moore said.

PATRIOT express

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Mexico's Cinco de Mayo is now an all-American fest

by MSgt. Lisa Spence-Elder

Americans love a festive occasion, and in recent years we have begun adopting one of the most festive days of our neighbors. Cinco de Mayo has sprung up as a holiday for all Americans. Even those who can't speak a word of Spanish know that it stands for the fifth of May and associate it with festivities in Mexico.

The Westover Club will help celebrate Cinco de Mayo by serving a Tex-Mex barbeque special from 5 to 8 p.m. on Friday, May 9.

A growing number of Americans know that Cinco de Mayo is a festive time filled with food, drink, mariachi music, dancing

and parades in Mexico. But most of us are unclear about the meaning of the holiday. We often confuse Cinco de Mayo with Mexico's independence day, which, in fact, is celebrated on Sept. 16.

Cinco de Mayo commemorates the battle of Puebla, when on May 5, 1862 the Mexican army, a small, ragged, untrained and under-equipped group of soldiers led by General Ignacio Zaragoza, defeated the French army. The French had launched a campaign to colonize Mexico while the Americans were distracted by the Civil War.

Cinco de Mayo has significance to all Americans as the last time that any foreign power tried to colonize North American soil.

Pat Stats

Served since Feb. 2, 2003

4,534 passengers --- 1,561 aircraft --- 16,173,054 pounds of cargo

Info from MSgt. Jim Garrity, 42APS

Meals

9,082 hot meals served --- Box lunches: 4,489

Info from TSgt. David Beauregard, 439SVS

Fuel since Feb. 1 --- 9,443,978 gallons of JP-8

Info from Jim Maloney, Fuels



MAKING A MARK --

Personnel from the 439th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron made a mark on history by training on board a C-130J. Last weekend members of the 439th AES trained with a C-130J from the 403rd Airlift Wing, Keesler AFB, Miss. This marks one of the first times that a AES has trained on a "J" model C-130. Pictured here is MSgt. Nancy Clegg literally making a mark on the newer C-130 with the squadron patch.

—photo by MSgt. W.C. Pope

Express-ions

WEAPONS OF MASS HUMILIATION

