

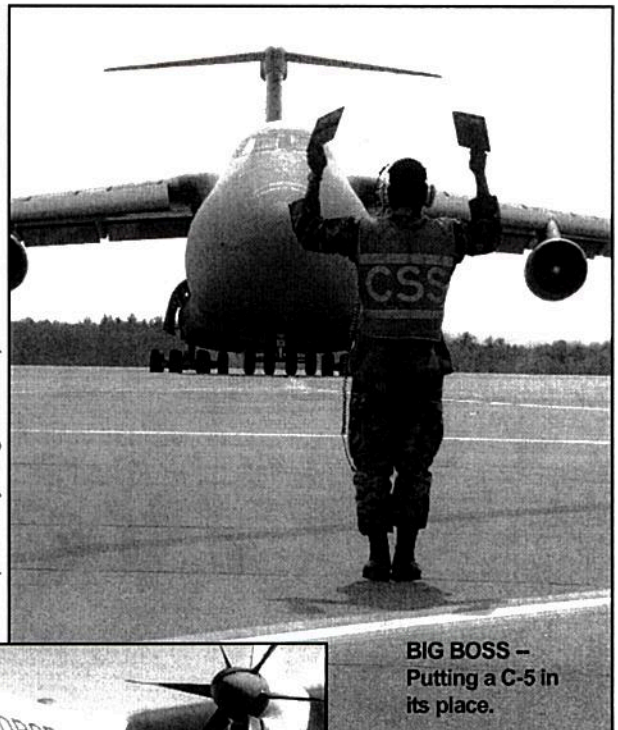
- ☑ Air Force thanks, and pins parents (back page)
- ☑ Our upland sandpiper is a big win for birders (back page)
- ☑ All back issues of the Patriot and Express can be downloaded from [www.afrc.af.mil/439aw](http://www.afrc.af.mil/439aw)

## Hustle and bustle of Westover, a hub of activity



— photos by MSgt. W.C. Pope

**WELCOMING HOME OUR OWN** – Members of the 439th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron return home from Operation Iraqi Freedom. Returning home are SrA Rebecca Hinch, MSgt. Steven Savage, Capt. Daniel McCarthy, and Maj. Charles Kerr.



**BIG BOSS** – Putting a C-5 in its place.



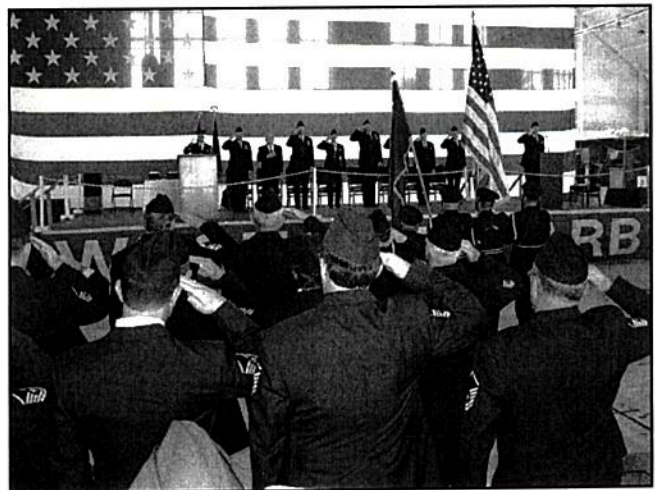
— photo by MSgt. Tom Allocco



**<<CHEEZE** – A group shot of the 439th AES with the crew of the C-130J from the 403th Wing, Keesler AFB, Miss. They trained together last weekend making it one of the first times any AES has trained on a "J" model.

**>>SALUTES** – A ceremony saluting 45 Westover retirees was held on Saturday and ended with a tribute to our fallen comrades.

**<<REUNION** – A soldier from the 414th Civil Affairs from Utica, NY, hugs his wife.





# Air Force thanks and pins parents

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Secretary of the Air Force James G. Roche and Air Force Chief of Staff General John P. Jumper will officially launch a new Air Force outreach program on Wednesday, May 7, at 11:30 a.m. EDT. The program is designed to thank parents of all airmen for supporting their military service. Secretary Roche and General Jumper will present USAF Parent Pins to the parents of one active duty airman, one Air National Guard airman and one Air Force Reserve Command airman. The presentations will take place in the office of the Secretary of the Air Force (4E874) and is open for media coverage.



The Parent Pin program gives every Air Force member the opportunity to register online and request a letter of thanks jointly signed by Secretary Roche and General Jumper be sent to up to two parents (or parental figures). Included with the letters will be lapel pins displaying the letter "P" cradled in the Air Force symbol. Parents are asked to wear their pins as signs of support for their children's military service.

"Military service is no longer a rite of passage," said Secretary Roche. "We now have an entire generation of Americans who do not understand the military culture. The Parent Pin can narrow the gulf between those who serve and the community at large. It opens the door for the parents of our airmen to explain to others what their children are doing for the Air Force and what the Air Force has done for their children."

The Parent Pins are a contemporary adaptation of the World War II "E" flags that were used to recognize companies for contributions to the war effort. They are presented to parents on display cards that explain their lineage. The accompanying letters address recipients and airmen by name and are intended to communicate to parents the importance of their children's military service, to express sincere gratitude for parents' continued support, and to convey a sense of partnership between the Air Force and the parents of America's airmen.

"It is in the best interest of our nation to develop public understanding of the Air Force's mission and objectives," said Secretary Roche. "The parents of our airmen might not always understand our mission, but they nonetheless are helping us meet our objectives through their continuing support of their sons and daughters - the men and women serving today, and those who decide to serve in the future."

If you wish to attend, please contact Maj Linda Haseloff or 2nd Lt. Sara Banda, 703-695-9871 or 0640.

## All star thanks

Dear Brig. Gen. Mazick,

One of my pilots, Lt. Col. Craig Edkins, recently returned from Operation Iraqi Freedom, where he supported General Franks' flying mission. Colonel Edkins had the pleasure of transiting through Westover ARB and came back to Andrews singing praises for the warm reception he and his fellow travelers received.

I want to personally thank the men and women of Westover, both military and civilian, who took the time to leave their homes in the middle of the night to welcome our airmen to American Soil. Their gratitude to our returning troops is heartwarming and I know much appreciated.

Thank you for taking care of them in such a first Class style. I hope to be able to do the same for yours one day!

Sincerely,  
Brig. Gen. Glenn F. Spears, Commander  
89th Airlift Wing, Andrews AFB, Md.

## Our upland sandpiper is a big win for birders

by MSgt. Tom Allocco

We've got the upland sandpiper. That might not sound like much, but to a birder, an upland sandpiper is gold.

Eighteen birders, known as bird watchers in the vernacular, came to Westover last Monday to see the upland sandpiper and other birds that nest here or migrate through Westover. At least two of the birds here, the upland sandpiper and the grasshopper sparrow, are on the endangered list. The grasshopper sparrow won't arrive here until mid-May.

Lt. Col. David Moore, Wing Chief of Safety, escorted the birders. "They would have liked to have seen the grasshopper sparrow, but they were delighted to see the upland sandpiper. They're much less common because of the reduction of grassland in Massachusetts," he said.

They also saw two wild turkeys and a red tailed hawk on base.

Other less common birds which they may have been looking for include the hooded merganser, which arrives at the end of February; the northern parula, from late April through May; and the eastern phoebe. They would have been particularly fortunate to have spotted a yellow bellied sapsucker is here for a few weeks in April and May and returns in the fall. The common yellowthroat is an uncommon bird due to arrive in mid-May.

Westover contains the largest contiguous grassland in the Northeast, 1,600 acres of the 2,600 acres of the installation. A large wetland complex created by Stoney Brook and Wade Lake covers the northeastern part of the base. Grasslands, pine plantations, forested wetlands, sedge meadows and cranberry bogs provide varied habitat.

Moore and others here work with the Massachusetts Division of Fish and Wildlife to protect the birds. Large sections of grassland are off-limits to protect them during breeding season.

## Pat Stats

Served since Feb. 2, 2003  
4,854 passengers --- 1,636 aircraft  
17,117,139 pounds of cargo  
Info from MSgt. Jim Garrity, 42APS

### Meals

9,669 hot meals served  
Box lunches: 4,568  
Info from MSgt. David Beauregard, 439SVS

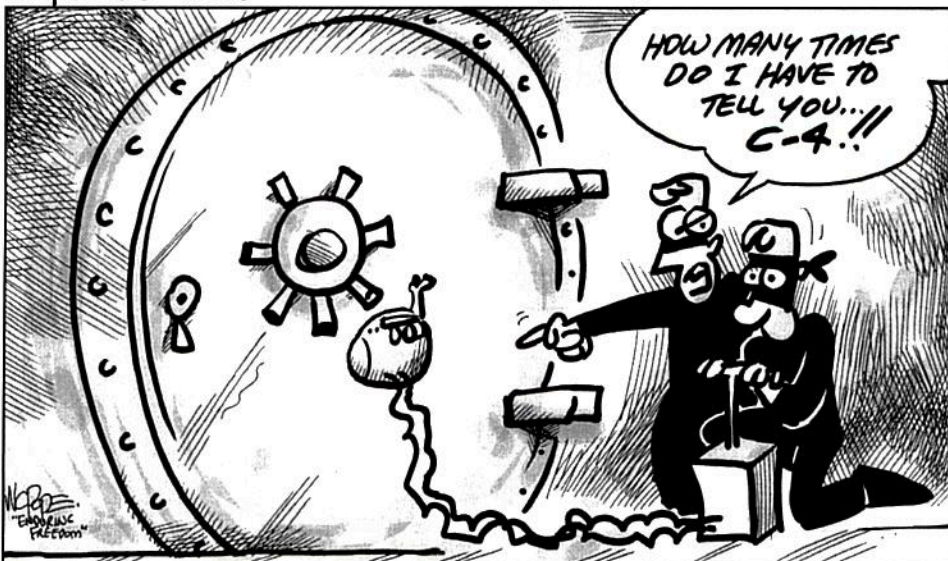
**PATRIOT**  
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(EDITOR'S NOTE: Security guidelines prohibit using last names of deploying reservists.)

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439patriot.editor@westover.af.mil

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## Express-ions





- ☑ New fire chief to expand cooperation (back page)
- ☑ Springfield breakfast will honor Service members (back page)
- ☑ Fitness Challenge, June 7 (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, Ext. 3031

**Fitness Center**  
Monday-Friday, 5:30 a.m.-2 a.m.  
Saturday-Sunday, 8 a.m.-2 a.m.  
Ext. 3958

**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,  
Midnight meals, 10:30 p.m.-1 a.m.  
boxed lunches provided 24/7  
\$3.25 for midnight/box  
for those on per diem  
Ext. 2026/3523

**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 & Mondays

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

## First Patriots home from war

**BACK HOME** – The first four Patriot wing members to return home from Operation Iraqi Freedom, celebrate on the flight line last Friday. The 439th AES team included Maj. Charles Kerr (left), MSgt. Steven Savage (center) and SrA. Rebecca Hinch. Weary, but happy, the aeromedical evacuation specialists received a well-deserved heroes' welcome from family and friends at the Westover Passenger Terminal.

—photo by MSgt. W.C. Pope



by SSgt. Andrew Biscoe

American flags, smiles mixed with emotion and relief, welcomed the first four Westover reservists who returned from their 38-day tour of duty in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The first of five aeromedical evacuation liaison team (AELT) members from the 439th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron arrived in a C-5 at Westover on May 2.

The AES members who were aboard the Dover AFB, Del., C-5 were Maj. Charles R. Kerr, Capt. Daniel J. McCarthy, MSgt. Steven P. Savage, and SrA. Rebecca E. Hinch. About 30 other Air Force personnel from Nellis AFB, Nev., were also aboard the Galaxy.

While the Nellis members were dressed in desert uniforms, it was easy to spot the Westover reservists who wore their battle dress uniforms for the flight.

Kerr was the first Westover member to shake hands with Brig. Gen. Martin M. Mazick, 439th AW commander. Kerr, who

lives in southeastern Massachusetts, looked forward to the final leg of his trip home.

"It feels great," Kerr said. "We were away for only a month and a half. But that's a long time when everything was going on the way it was."

Kerr and the other three AES members make up an AELT team. The reservists supported Army and Marine medical airlift operations during the war.

A group of flag-waving Westover workers, ranging from USO volunteers to civilian employees and reservists, gathered outside the passenger terminal to greet the group. But they no sooner got out of the C-5 than to be welcomed by Brig. Gen. Martin M. Mazick and other base leadership.

Also on hand to welcome home the reservists was Col. Belinda R. Morrone, AES commander. "It's wonderful. I'm really happy to see them back." Morrone said. "I've been looking forward to getting them back here."

CCMSgt. Jeffrey B. Sherwin, 439th

(continued on next page)



## Return... (Cont. from page 1)

Airlift Wing command chief master sergeant, joined Mazick and Morrone with the welcoming party on the flight line. A former AES member, Sherwin is the wing commander's senior enlisted advisor now. He was pleased to see people return whom he had trained for just such an event. Sherwin was NCOIC of an AES AELT during Operation Desert Storm in 1991.

"We've never had this many AELT teams deployed before – even during the first Gulf War," he said. "We had two AELT teams during that war."

As of press time, mission requirements had not allowed the remaining four AELT teams to come home. The reservists are still kept busy with evacuating people who may be injured by unexploded ordnance and other events from the war in Iraq.

## Fitness Challenge, June 7

The Westover Fitness Center will host its annual Fitness Challenge starting at 11:30 a.m. on Saturday, June 7.

Teams must be coed and pre-registration is required. The challenge includes an obstacle course, basic orienteering course, running, biking and canoeing.

For more information, call the Fitness Center at extension 3958.

### Pat Stats

Served since Feb. 2, 2003

4,978 passengers — 1,714 aircraft

17,742,622 pounds of cargo

Info from MSgt. Jim Garrity, 42APS

#### Meals

10,160 hot meals served

Box lunches: 4,641

Info from MSgt. David Beauregard, 439SVS

#### Fuel since Feb. 1

10,088,847 gallons of JP-8

Info from Jim Maloney, Fuels

## PATRIOT express

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

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## New fire chief will expand cooperation

by SrA. T.R. Ouellette

Due to an impressive resume and fresh from winning two significant awards, an eight-year veteran of Westover's Fire Department was selected as its new fire chief.

Charlie Van Gorden was promoted to the position officially on April 20.

Prior to serving here, Van Gorden served in the fire departments at Griffiss AFB, N.Y. for eight years and Malmstrom AFB, Mont. for four.

He recently earned both the Air Force Reserve Command's "Best Civilian Fire Officer of the Year" and Westover's "Civilian Supervisor of Quarter" (First quarter-2003).

At 39, Van Gorden may be one of the youngest fire chiefs serving in the Air Force Reserve.

Contributing to his selection as fire chief, Van Gorden is currently the only member of Westover's 62-member fire department to have achieved the Department of Defense's highest levels of certification in every category in the fire prevention occupation.

"I'm happy to have been selected, but a fire chief doesn't make the department. The

department makes the manager. I can only be as good as they are and we have a very knowledgeable and experienced staff," Van Gorden said. The new chief already has set some goals for the base's fire department.

His main, long-term goal is to change the impression that the department exists only to fight fires. He would prefer his department be known as "Westover's Fire and Emergency Services Department" because of the many non-fire related problems they handle.

"If there is a problem, we want to be the ones you call," Van Gorden said. "We have EMTs on duty 24 hours every day, we are the only department in the local area certified in technical rope rescue (used for high angle/confined space rescues), and as of June 1, every one of our fire department members will be certified at the highest level of hazardous material training," he said.

His short-term goal is to expand the tradition of cooperation with community fire departments.

"Without ever hurting our mission needs here, I'd like to strengthen our relationships with local fire departments for the benefit of our community," Van Gorden said.

## Springfield breakfast will honor Service members

The City of Springfield will host what is billed as the world's largest pancake breakfast on Main Street, featuring a free pancake breakfast for anyone with a military ID card.

Col. Thomas Mauzaka, special assistant to the wing commander, will be an honorary co-chair of the pancake breakfast. The event helps celebrate the 367<sup>th</sup> birthday of the founding of the city.

The pancake breakfast will be served from 8 to 11 a.m.

Following the breakfast, an Armed Forces Day Celebration will be held at the Springfield Armory, located on the campus of Springfield Technical Community College, beginning at 11:30 a.m. The celebration is free and open to the public.

## Bowling Center specials

Enjoying bowling is easier than ever at the Westover Bowling Center, which offers a variety of choices for bowlers from league play to cosmic bowling and birthday parties.

Sign-ups are being taken for a Thursday night mixed bowling league. On Monday nights from 6 to 9 p.m. games are only \$1 each and shoe rental is \$1.

Cosmic bowling is featured at the Bowling Center starting a 7 p.m. every Friday and Saturday.

For youths through age 12, the center offers a birthday bowling party special starting at \$7.50 per person. Included are two hours of bowling, shoes, choice of meal, party plates and other condiments.

The Bowling Center's snack bar is open for lunch from 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

To learn more about entertainment at the center, call Ext. 3990.

## Expressions





# PATRIOT *express*

439th Airlift Wing  
Westover ARB, Mass  
May 13, 2003 #23

- ☑ Job well done, says former wing commander (back page)
- ☑ Marines come home by way of Baghdad (back page)
- ☑ Armed Forces Day is May 17!



## A big welcome for our Security Forces

Family and friends welcome home SMSgt. Michael Grady (above), TSgt. Christopher Mazzei (left) and SSgt. John Shepard of the 439th Security Forces Squadron last Tuesday. The three security specialists came home after three months of helping provide defense at a desert air base in the Iraqi Freedom AOR.

—photos by MSgt. Tom Allocco and SSgt. Andrew Biscoe

# Patriots at center of Baghdad action

by MSgt. Tom Allocco

Patriot Wing members are serving at the "heart of the universe" in the war against terrorism, according to the senior Westover officer at Iraq's Baghdad airport.

Lt. Col. James led an 11-member 439th Airlift Control Flight team to the newly liberated Iraqi capital in late April. Also serving at the airport are 13 security specialists of the 439th Security Forces Flight, two members of the Wing Intelligence shop and a Finance specialist.

Living conditions are so basic at the airport that his airlift control team was looking forward to stepping up to the relative comfort of a tent city which would be set up within a week or two, Lt. Col. James said last weekend. The Westover airlift specialists have set up a Tactical Airlift Control Element which is handling all air flow missions at the Baghdad

airport.

"This is the best operational thing we've ever seen in the history of the 439th ALCF... this is a very high visibility... there is so much going on it is unbelievable," the ALCF commander said.

He noted that distinguished visitors coming to the airport include Air Force Gen. Richard B. Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; and Gen. Eric K. Shinseki, Army chief of staff. Retired Army Lt. Gen. Jay M. Garner, administrator of Iraq, is a frequent visitor, as well as senior State Department officials.

The Baghdad airport is the center of air operations to deploy troops and deliver the humanitarian aid needed to rebuild the country.

Among the Westover members deployed to Baghdad, the perception is that "this is the heart of the universe, where it is all happening," Lt. Col. James said.

Just knowing that they are players in events

of worldwide significance is a morale booster for Patriot Wing members serving in Baghdad. "There are high spirits. You don't get an opportunity like this often. This is the real deal," Lt. Col. James said.

"They're doing a great job, supporting the mission," is his assessment of the 439th AW security, airlift, intelligence and finance specialists serving in Baghdad. The prestige is compensation for austere living conditions and long hours in a hot and dusty climate.

Lt. Col. James said improvements were underway, but living conditions were "like camping." They still had no hot meals. The airlift control specialists were living on three MRE's a day, "if you choose to eat that many," he said.

They were living in hardened facilities and looking forward to moving into tents. There was no power or water in the housing. They had

(continued on next page)

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



## Patriots in Iraq... (cont. from page 1)

outdoor showers and no hot water.

The airport is built on the model of the Charles DeGaulle Airport, Paris, and has a very large terminal. The Army captured the airfield and terminal in a few days of fighting and they are largely intact.

The cross taxiways still have bomb damage which is being repaired by Air Force civil engineer rapid runway repair specialists. Iraqi contractors are bringing in truckloads of gravel for the repair. The Royal Australian Air Force is operating the control tower and there are some British RAF airmen at the field.

Although the large scale fighting is over, there is still the ever present awareness of being in a combat zone. There are still sniper and RPG (rocket propelled grenade) skirmishes and fighting between Iraqi factions.

Two American soldiers were killed last week in attacks in Baghdad. Another was injured by a mine. Aircraft coming in frequently dispense flares due to the threat assessment.

The Patriot Wing members, like others, keep their weapons with them 24 hours a day and carry the weapons when they move around the airport.

A mobile aeromedical staging facility at the airport evacuates patients every day, including soldiers injured in a recent non-combat helicopter crash.

The air field is split between military and humanitarian/civilian operations. Westover's

airlift control specialists are performing a mission similar to the one some of them performed at King Khalid Military City, Saudi Arabia, in 1991. They are airlifting out troops and equipment and bringing in fresh replacements. Just underway, is the airlift home of some of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division soldiers who were in the spearhead of the drive to Baghdad.

Humanitarian missions come in 24 hours a day, since the arrival of Red Cross, NGO (non-government organizations) and government officials. Aid is being delivered from worldwide sources to restore hope to the Iraqi people and rebuild the country's infrastructure.

The airlift control specialists don't know how long they will be in Baghdad, but expect it will be at least until an operations support squadron sets up a command post.

In the meantime, living conditions are improving and "the days pass by very quickly. All the people here from the 439<sup>th</sup> have their eyes squarely on the mission. They know why they are here," Lt. Col. James said.

## Former wing commander gives Patriot pat on back

Former Patriot Wing commander, Maj. Gen. James P. Czekanski visited Westover last Friday and applauded wing members on a job well done.

"Congratulations on the level of work you have done. It's great to come back here...the men and women of Westover can rise to any challenge. Thanks so very much for what you have accomplished. You did a fantastic job. I couldn't be more proud," Czekanski said.

The former wing commander serves as commander of 4<sup>th</sup> Air Force at March AFB, Calif., a command which includes aircraft in the continental U.S., Hawaii and Guam. While here he expressed appreciation for the Patriot Wing's good relationship with his maintainers from Lackland AFB who are serving here.

The 4<sup>th</sup> Air Force commander served as 439<sup>th</sup> AW commander from 1992 to 1997. He was named to his present command in August, 2000.

Czekanski's visit to Westover coincide with an engagement as guest speaker at an University of Massachusetts ROTC Dining Out.

## Express-ions



## Marines come home by way of Baghdad

by MSgt. Tom Allocco

For nine Marine Air Wing members, a stop at the Westover Passenger Terminal was the last leg in a long journey home for their unit which started in southern Iraq and passed through Baghdad. They are from a helicopter group which provided close air support for Marines in the slugging match from Basra to Baghdad. Their Hueys also provided small unit insertion and casualty evacuation.

The Marines of Marine Aircraft Group 39 of I Marine Expeditionary Force deployed with their helicopter gunship Cobras and Hueys from Camp Pendleton, Calif. to the Enduring Freedom AOR in January. Among them was Cobra pilot Capt. Justin Eggstaff, call-sign "Eggs," who was in the Passenger Terminal last Thursday.

He described their war as day and night flying as Marines moved to Basra, Nasiriyah, Kut and Baghdad. The mission of Eggstaff and the other Cobra and Huey pilots was "destroying targets of opportunity...if something was bogging them (Marine ground forces) down, we'd take care of that."

The gunships would fly to a forward operating base, refuel and sit on strip alert awaiting orders.

Eggstaff remembers the day they pulled down Saddam's statue, but that's not how the war ended for him. On his last day of combat an Iraqi shot at his Cobra with an AK 47.

"One day they just stopped shooting. One day you were going up north destroying things and the next day they didn't anything for you to kill," he said.

## Free ride to see James Taylor

Services Squadron will offer free bus rides to the James Taylor Tanglewood concert on Tuesday, June 24. Concert tickets will be \$21 for the lawn.

Sign-ups for the bus trip will be taken at the Fitness Center through Friday, May 16. Seating is limited. For more information, call TSgt. Neal Normandin at the Fitness Center at Ext. 3958.

## Pat Stats

Served since Feb. 2, 2003  
5,240 passengers --- 1,816 aircraft  
18,783,162 pounds of cargo  
Info from MSgt. Jim Garrity, 42APS

### Meals

10,730 hot meals served  
Box lunches: 4,652  
Info from MSgt. David Beauregard, 439SVS

### Fuel since Feb.1

11,401,773 gallons of JP-8  
Info from Jim Maloney, Fuels

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

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## First security forces home from desert

by MSgt. Tom Allocco

Patrick Grady is wearing his Armed Forces Expeditionary Expeditionary medal with glowing pride. Patrick may even take the blue and yellow ribbon to "Show and Tell" at kindergarten.

Along with a hug that swept him off the ground, six-year-old Patrick was pinned with the Expeditionary Medal by his dad, SMSgt. Michael Grady, who came home last week from an Iraqi Freedom desert air base. Patrick almost dropped his "Welcome Home Daddy" sign.

Grady, who served six months at the air base, came home to a Westover welcome with fellow 439th Security Forces Squadron members TSgt. Christopher Mazzei and SSgt. John Shepard. TSgt. Michael Serrichio and SSgt. Joseph Wilkinson had come home earlier from serving with the security forces at the desert base in the AOR. Last week's celebration of the return home of the three security specialists was filmed for the local news by both Springfield television stations, 22 and 40.

The Westover security police served with the 363rd Expeditionary SFS providing security at the housing area known as Coalition Complex, and the air field operations area,

located a number of miles away. The housing compound is surrounded by fence topped by concertina wire and wooden watchtowers staffed by security police.

The security specialists patrolled the desert in two- and four-member fire teams in "up-armored" Humvees, with additional armor and a mounted M-60.

Grady described the patrols as "just like driving on the moon." There are very few landmarks to find your way and the security police wore night vision goggles. During the winter months the temperature dropped fast at night, making it cold enough to need gloves. Desert foxes - tiny and tan - scorpions and camel spiders are part of the landscape.

Grady served as a flight sergeant, conducting an 11 p.m. guard mount each night. Shepard worked with him. Mazzei was responsible for checking on the effectiveness and reinforcing physical security, such as jersey barriers and concertina wire. Others duties of the security forces were bus escort, patrolling the fence line and guarding storage areas and assets in the air field operations area.

The air operations included F-15 and F-16 and RAF Tornados. Also serving at the base were airmen of the Royal Australian Air Force and French Air Force. When the Patriot Wing security police arrived in November the expeditionary force was conducting Southern Watch operations. Their arrival coincided with a dramatic surge in flying operations. The population of the base doubled and people lived three members to a room, with two sharing a bunk bed.

"We watched the base evolve from Southern Watch into Iraqi Freedom in a very short period of time. There were more planes, more equipment. They built a tent city. All branches of the military were represented there in huge numbers," Grady said.

"Planes were taking off loaded with munitions and coming back empty. There were more sorties, more munitions movement," he said.

Reserve and Guard members made up about 70 percent of the security force. The slogan at the base was One Team, One Fight.

The active duty administration in the squadron appreciated the experience that the Reserve and Guard members brought to the team. Grady is a Massachusetts environmental police officer, Mazzei is a New York City police officer and Shepard is a police officer in New Hampton, N.H.

The security police were activated shortly after the 9/11 attacks. Grady and Shepard previously served three months overseas on Enduring Freedom missions.

(continued on next page)

## Star spangled day



Army Pvt. Robert Minnich of New Jersey (top) comes home to a heartfelt welcome from his wife, Brooke, seven months pregnant, upon his return from the Iraqi Freedom AOR with an accidental injury. Westover volunteer Margaret Cote (below) has a big hug for another soldier who walked on the red carpet at the Westover Passenger Terminal.

—photos by MSgt. Tom Allocco

### Lights, camera, action!

We're going to be in the movies.

The Air Force News Service last week sent a reporter here to make a video record of air bridge activities on base. SSgt. Bill Scherer, who is also a producer for the San Antonio, Texas based AF News, spent parts of two days here taking video. He recorded a Westover welcome of troops returning from the Iraqi Freedom AOR, maintenance people on the flight line, aerial porters at work and more.

Scherer was here as part of a swing through the area, including the KC-135 aerial refueling operations out of Bangor IAO and Pease ANGB.

The video he shot is expected to air in June. It will be distributed on VCR cassettes Air Force wide and will also be distributed to local cable stations nationwide as part of the Air Force Television News Service.

The reporter was impressed by what he saw here. "I'm amazed at the level of activity going on at Westover. I've never seen so many C-5s on the ground in one place. I hope to return on a regular basis," Scherer said.



## Security in desert... (cont. page 1)

Because the base is large and well established, living conditions were better than for most others in the Iraqi Freedom AOR. Four dining halls offered hot meals 24 hours a day. A learning resource center offered a library, computers and self-help programs from stress control classes to yoga and CLEP testing. Mazzei took advantage of the opportunities to complete his bachelor's degree in criminal justice at the desert base.

Entertainment included country and western, Latin and other dance nights, a first class gym, a large swimming pool and a Burger King, which was located in a trailer.

On the down side, there was no opportunity to leave the area of Coalition Complex and the air field during the six months. Outside the fence of Coalition Complex you could see lights at night but only flat desert landscape during the day. Between the complex and air field, palm trees along the roads were watered by underground irrigation pipes. The monotonous brown/tan color of everything – buildings, uniforms and sand – soon made everyone wish to see the colors of New England and the civilian world.

On the base, broken stone was laid out around buildings in place of grass. The only thing growing in the soil of Coalition Complex was a single, hardy shrub that was nurtured and watered every day by a group of sailors. "Fred," they called the courageous foot-tall plant.

Humor and flexibility got people through the day. "People tend to tolerate more than at home. You have to have a thick skin. There's a lot of people working together in close proximity," Grady said.

He most missed the simple things in life, small children, grass, trees, Grady said. He missed six months of holidays and his son's birthday and the great Italian cooking of his wife, Concetta.

Iraqi Freedom meant sacrifice, but what the security police brought home from the AOR was something they will always keep with them.

"The thing that was amazing was watching so many people come together, all branches of the military, for the common good. There was a lot of sacrifice. But, I'll be able to look back and say I was there for it," Grady said.

# **PATRIOT** *express*

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

Contact us:

DSN:589-2020 - (413) 557-2020

www.afrc.af.mil/439aw

439patriot.editor@westover.af.mil

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## Airman comes here for red carpet "first"

by MSgt. Tom Allocco

SSgt. John Pomilia of the Alabama Air Guard has deployed from Iceland to Mogadishu and seen a lot of things, but he had to come to New England for one "first time" experience. When he got off the bus at the Westover Passenger Terminal it was the first time in years of worldwide deployments that he ever came home to a genuine, full-blown red carpet welcome back to American soil.

Pomilia was among troops who returned from the Iraqi Freedom AOR last Friday evening. "I've come back when the wing commander or squadron commander would be there to shake your hand. But then you would go and do your paperwork. I never had a welcome home like this," Pomilia said.

Pomilia received the Westover welcome here, complete with hamburgers, music, flags and USO treats. "It was definitely unexpected. I was shocked, to say the least. It was very nice," he said.

He was among members of the 187<sup>th</sup> Fighter Wing who returned from supporting F-16 operations from a desert base. For the

munitions specialist, the three months in the desert was the latest in a long string of deployments.

He served nine years on active duty, during which he served at Diego Garcia during Desert Storm; Mogadishu, Somalia in 1993, then after two weeks at home he went to Brindisi, Italy in support of Bosnian operations; back to Somalia in 1994; Haiti, and Somalia again in 1995.

Pomilia also served a year in Iceland, where he saw it snow on June 26. That didn't amaze him as much as snow in the desert. He that one night in March it was cold enough at his desert base for light snow flurries.

"You had to look carefully, but it was definitely snow flurries. The cold was unbelievable. We wrapped our heads in our desert scarves and we wore our flak vests for warmth," he said.

## Party for Lt. Col. Carey

The 42<sup>nd</sup> Aerial Port Squadron invites Westover people to honor squadron commander Lt. Col. James P. Carey in his retirement. The retirement party will be held on June 7 at Heidi's Restaurant in South Hadley.

Dinner will be served from 6-7 p.m. followed by presentations from 7:30-9 p.m. Dancing will conclude the party from 9 p.m. to midnight. Cost is \$15 per person and attire is business casual. Those people interested in attending the party should RSVP by June 2 to Maj. James Finneran or Thomas Clark at Ext. 3276.

## Pat Stats

Served since Feb. 2, 2003

5,364 passengers --- 1,890 aircraft

19,708,923 pounds of cargo

Info from MSgt. Jim Garrity, 42APS

Meals

11,199 hot meals served

Box lunches: 4,652

Info from MSgt. David Beauregard, 439SVS

Fuel since Feb. 1

12,325,246 gallons of JP-8

Info from Jim Maloney, Fuels

## Hand sewn American flag says thanks from students

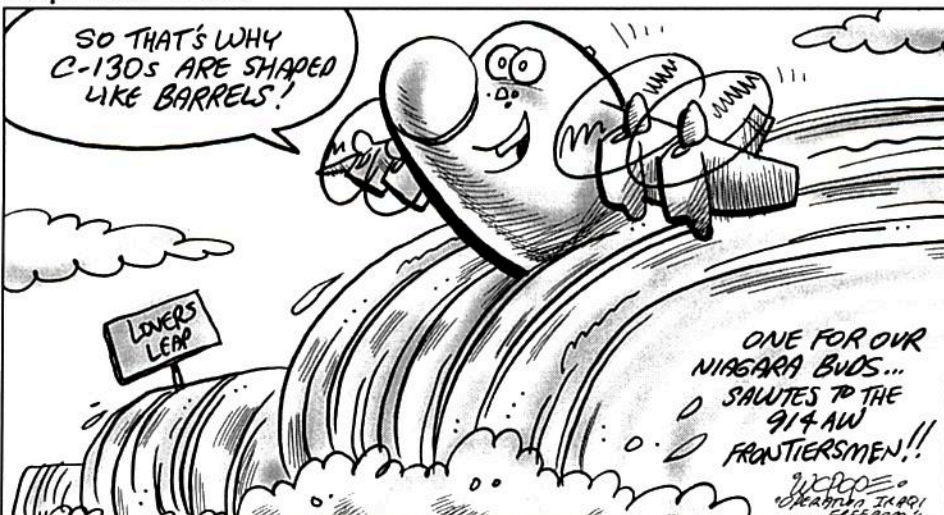
A class of Ware school children gave the Patriot Wing a big red, white and blue "Thank You!" recently.

The youngster's hand sewed a three by five foot American flag and presented it to the men and women of Westover with a card expressing thanks for all we do. The flag is in a glass and wood frame, with the thank you card, in the Wing Headquarters Building.

Old Glory was sewn by kindergartners through third graders of Stanley M. Koziol Elementary School of Ware. They belong to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center Sew Easy Sewing Club of Diane Feltner, wife of SMSgt. Bill Feltner, a 439<sup>th</sup> Aircraft Maintenance Squadron expediter and hydraulics specialist.

The 17 children of the after school program worked on the flag two days a week for six weeks as a gift for the Patriot Wing.

## Express-ions





Great to be back home!

## Flyers Inn juggles challenge of surge

Article and photo  
by SSgt. Andrew Biscoe

These workers are in the eye of the storm of Westover's surge of operations now stretching into its third month.

And for those who might have misconceptions about how active the base is, they don't have to look any further than 650 Airlift Drive.

That's the address of the Flyers Inn, the hub of Westover lodging operations. Perched on a gentle slope on the southern end of the base, this is where the staff handles a constant flow of guests.

They are reservists from throughout New England who travel to Westover for the traditional weekend UTA's. Or they're a tired transient C-5 aircrew seeking a good night's rest before completing another leg of a flight that covers half of the world.

The lodging staff falls under the 439<sup>th</sup> Services Squadron. They have only been able to meet the demands of a 24-hour schedule with help from four mobilized reservists. Three augmentees with a New York state Air Force Reserve unit arrived to help in March. They are from the 914<sup>th</sup> Services Squadron in Niagara Falls. Another augmentee from Westover's services squadron is also on the inn staff.

Each day, the desk clerks and housekeepers work with a core of about 300 rooms on base. Another 160 rooms will be added this summer. The staff assists its guests to find places close to Westover, but sometimes that means military people are put up as far as Bradley International Airport, about a half-hour's drive south of the base on Interstate 91.

Services Director Chris Menard said the 160 new rooms will greatly help the staff meet the lodging needs. "We can handle the day-to-day stuff; it's the UTA's that generate spillover into the local hotels," he said.

That's why finding rooms is especially challenging when the weekend rolls around, said Kathy Roy, front desk supervisor and group reservationist. When rooms fill up on base, she and her staff coordinate lodging needs with area hotels in Springfield, Holyoke, Northampton, and Chicopee.

The surge has sent a steady stream of aircrews through Westover, most of which are transient C-5 stage crews.

"Since February, we have averaged eight aircrews per day with between 10 and 12 crew members," Roy said, over a steady jingle of telephones at the front desk. "It does get very hectic."

(continued on next page)



Security specialists of the 439<sup>th</sup> SFS step foot on American soil for the first time last Sunday after six months in the Iraqi Freedom AOR. Maj. Maryann Lutz, squadron commander led the 11-member team during their overseas deployment. Others greeted at the Passenger Terminal upon their return home were 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Shawn Swarz, CMSgt. Frank Puopolo, SMSgt. Michael Thorpe, MSgt. Randy Bates, MSgt. Stephen Valley, TSgt. Michael Bellerose, TSgt. Paul Cyr, TSgt. Rick Schmoke, SSgt. Bruce Lawler and SSgt. Wayne Baptiste.

— photo by MSgt. W.C. Pope

## Frontiersmen ride first class

by MSgt. Tom Allocco

Thirteen Frontiersmen maintainers from the 914<sup>th</sup> Airlift Wing, Niagara Falls, N.Y. got more than a first class welcome when they arrived here from overseas recently. The Iraqi Freedom veterans also got a first class ride home. Their wing commander, Col. Wade Farris, flew here in a Niagara Falls C-130 to fly them home on the last leg of their long flight from Southwest Asia.

The Niagara Falls maintainers had been at a bare base in the Iraqi Freedom AOR since March operating six of their C-130s Hercules. Among those here to welcome them home were Niagara Falls Services members who have been helping the Patriot Wing since the start of the surge.

For several of those coming home from the Iraqi Freedom AOR, the Westover Welcome was the second time they had walked across a red carpet laid out by the Patriot Wing.

MSgt. Bill Bulleigh and TSgt. John Gallaway came home from Desert Storm almost exactly 12 years earlier by way of the long red carpet in the Base Hangar. Some of the same USO volunteers who greeted the Niagara Falls maintainers in 1991 were in the Passenger Terminal for the 2003 replay, including Marilyn Spofford and Margaret Cote.

For Gallaway, an aerospace ground equipment specialist, the Westover welcome was déjà vu. In both 1991 and 2003 he was caught off-guard by the red carpet treatment.

"We weren't expecting the hugs, flags and grilled hamburgers and hot dogs when

we got here. It was great seeing another red carpet," he said.

The USO volunteers, music and red carpet were reminiscent of the Desert Storm welcome, Gallaway said. "That was fantastic," he said of 1991. "The people who showed up, especially the Vietnam vets. It was really touching."

"We weren't expecting this at all," said Bulleigh, a plans and scheduling specialist. For those who experienced the pomp of the Desert Storm welcome home, it is something they will never forget. The Passenger Terminal may be smaller than the Base Hangar of Desert Storm days, but the "the flags and hugs were a nice treat," he said.

The hamburgers and hot dogs were a special treat for troops who had been eating MREs in recent days. They came here from a desert base that closed its dining hall more than a week before they departed as part of the base closing process.

"It was a pretty bare base when we arrived," Gallaway said. There was no chow hall. We ate MREs for the first week or two. Then they served one hot meal a day, then two hot meals," he said.

When they arrived in March the temperature was already in the 80s and continued to climb until they left. Entertainment was a TV tent, a volleyball net and "dumbbells" fashioned out of sandbags.

The recreational highpoint of their time in the desert air base was when Kentucky Air Guard members bought 800 pizzas to help everybody celebrate Derby Day.

The air base accommodated C-130 Hercules and F-15 Eagle.



## Lodging... (continued from front)

"We make sure the aircrews get their crew rest," said MSgt. Barbara Hall, a Niagara Falls augmentee. Hall could be at Westover for up to a year. A member of the 914<sup>th</sup> port mortuary team, Hall has frequently deployed before. The 18-year veteran handled front desk duties at Mildenhall, England, and has worked in the recreation, fitness and food service areas of services.

She liked how the services mission support has seen at Westover. "Everybody's really looking out for people that are coming back from the sandbox," Hall said.

"Their help is wonderful," front desk clerk Kim Desotell said about the difference the augmentees have made. Similar to the civilian hotel industry, Desotell said her job requires that she and her co-workers go out of their way to accommodate their guests. "I'm a people person," she said. "Some people are cranky. We deal with it. The customers are always right."

Facing another busy weekend recently, Roy spoke about the diligence and patience that her workers have shown while the base has met challenges and shortfalls in resources.

"All of our desk clerks and housekeepers have been working very hard," Roy said. "Some times having the aircrews can be very demanding, but our workers are always polite and do their jobs."

Menard said these workers were at the core of Westover's initial response to the surge of aircrews that descended into Westover, and its Flyers Inn, this past winter. "Initially, it took many man hours and personal sacrifice on the part of our lodging crew to accommodate everyone," he said. "Most of the management staff (civilian) worked around the clock on numerous occasions to meet the needs of incoming crews at all hours of the night."

In the meantime, Hall said, service is what lodging is all about, no matter what the challenges are. "We give them the best hotels that we can," she said.

## 58th Aerial Porters keep Guam moving

by Maj. John P. Mailo  
Deployment OIC

A team of 20 aerial porters of the 58<sup>th</sup> APS completed two weeks of duty at Andersen AFB, Guam, working along side of the transporters of the 734<sup>th</sup> Air Mobility Squadron in April.

Working with the 734<sup>th</sup> AMS in Guam provided premier training with state of the art facilities that afford supervisors the opportunity to assess and measure aerial porters' experience and knowledge.

Andersen AFB is the major AMC enroute station for all cargo and passengers transiting the Pacific theater. The strategic importance of Andersen was magnified with the closing of Clark AB in the Philippines 12 years ago.

It is true that for 103 years Guam is where America's day begins. Sunny days, bright blue skies, gentle trade winds and crystal clear waters are the hallmarks of Guam. Even the threat of Typhoon Kujira could not dampen the spirits of the 58<sup>th</sup> APS. Fortunately, it passed harmlessly 140 miles south of the island.

The large number of aircraft transiting Andersen allowed the Patriot Wing aerial porters to hone their skills and learn to resolve potential problems with aircraft with which they do not normally work, including KC-10s, KC-135s, C-17s and C-9s. In addition, the variety of commercial cargo airframes, including MD-11, 747, DC-10 and DC-8, provided excellent training for the aerial porters to rediscover skills that are not used on a daily basis at Westover.

The 58<sup>th</sup> APS was integrated into all facets of the 734<sup>th</sup> AMS Passenger Service Terminal, Air Terminal Operations Center and Air Freight Services.

A bonus of the trip was that six squadron members were certified on the 60 K aircraft

## Pat Stats

Served since Feb. 2, 2003  
5,712 passengers — 1,989 aircraft  
20,729,587 pounds of cargo  
Info from MSgt. Jim Garrity, 42APS

Meals  
12,092 hot meals served  
Box lunches: 4,915  
Info from MSgt. David Beauregard, 439SVS

Fuel since Feb. 1  
12,976,935 gallons of JP-8  
Info from Jim Maloney, Fuels

loader. The 60 K loader is the mainstay of the material handling of equipment fleet and required for all transporters. The comprehensive two-week course includes academic instruction in the fundamentals, maintenance and operation of the vehicle.

Certification on the new 25K Halverson loader was also provided. This was a win for the squadron MHE training and unit readiness. The classes allowed the aerial porters to maximize their training opportunities.

The tour was a homecoming of sorts for MSgt. Stephen Winters. His father was a Westover B-52 pilot who deployed to Guam during the Vietnam War and flew Arc Light bombing missions from Andersen's runways.

TSgt. Charles Allen was stationed at Andersen for 18 months and renewed old acquaintances. Winters and Allen could not believe how much the base has changed.

Last Dec. 8 super typhoon Pongsonga slammed ashore with 180 mph sustained winds and gusts of more than 240 mph. The typhoon stalled over Guam for 17 hours, dumping 15 inches of rain and causing \$121 million in damages.

Andersen suffered serious damage to many base facilities. The results were still evident when the 58<sup>th</sup> APS was on Guam. Roofs were torn off, buildings demolished and trees uprooted. Street signs were missing and the poles bent flat to the ground.

## Express-ions

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

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- ☒ Thank a veteran on Memorial Day
- ☒ First troops in war return for round two (back page)
- ☒ Childrens' party is tonight (back page)

## LSS supports airlift from 'City of 100 Spires' to Iraq

by MSgt. Tom Allocco

Not every deployment in support of Iraqi Freedom is to a tent in a desert base. Two supply specialists learned that some overseas locations involve less hardship than others after they were assigned to one of the great tourist regions of Europe in April.

MSgt. Carla Letourneau and MSgt. Richard Greene of the 439<sup>th</sup> Logistics Support Squadron served for three weeks assisting an airlift out of Prague, Czech Republic. The Eastern European city, known as the City of One Hundred Spires for its many cathedrals, has been noted for its magnificent architecture and culture since medieval times.

When the 439<sup>th</sup> LSS was looking for two people to deploy overseas to support Iraqi Freedom from a location which was classified at that time, most people assumed it would be a life of bottled water and MREs.

"I didn't know how to pack, for warm or cold weather. I packed for everything, but I brought too much warm weather stuff. We thought we were going to the sand," Letourneau said. "I thought of Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, all those places named 'stan'," Greene said. They only learned where they were going when handed their orders shortly before boarding a C-5 that flew directly from here to Prague. They went over with a team of C-5 maintainers from the 105<sup>th</sup> AW, Stewart ANGB, NY.

"Because of the situation, you thought the worse. Come to find out, one of the



**PRAGUE IN SPRING** -- When two Westover supply specialists deployed to Prague, they stayed in one of the oldest and most cultured cities in Europe, known as the City of 100 Spires for its centuries old architecture.

—photo by MSgt. Richard Greene

surprises was Prague and a totally different mission," Letourneau said. The two supply specialists conducted inventory and supplied parts and tools for maintainers during the C-5 and C-17 airlift from a Prague airport to Iraq.

The aircraft delivered Czech Army medical teams, supplies, equipment and vehicles to Iraq as that country's contribution to the growing humanitarian effort. The NATO ally sent field hospital workers to Afghanistan to treat civilians in 2002.

When the airlift started, Letourneau and Greene were the only two supply people, working with about 90 other Americans. Each took a 12-hour shift. The aerial porters and maintainers worked hard for on-time take-offs for the aircraft. The airport was guarded by Czech Army soldiers in desert camouflage uniforms, some armed with M-16s.

At the airport, the supply specialists met a Westover aircrew in the airlift. "It was nice to say welcome...have somebody from home station," Letourneau said.

The hours were long, but there was time to mix with the tourists in one of the great cities of Europe.

"A beautiful, beautiful city, no pavement, just all cobblestone, very old historical buildings, stucco and brick," Letourneau said. "The cathedrals are breathtaking," she said.

"There is just crystal everywhere. And it's sort of like stepping back in time. You reach some points in the city and you just go 'ahhh,'" she said.

They toured a castle on a hill, once the domain of a King Ferdinand, king of Bohemia. They saw hundreds of hunting rifles, some with pearl in-lay, and antique blunderbusses. Coats of arms, armor suits for men and horses, shields and swords told

them they were walking in a realm with a long history.

They stayed at a three star hotel – The Diplomat – with features including a sauna and a go-cart track for guests. To get around the city there was a subway and also trolley cars on tracks with electric cables. The Vltava River is spanned by a series of historic bridges. Letourneau remembers the Charles Bridge with ornate religious figures, and a plaza where artists sold their wares and musicians played for coins.

"It's a very old city, with a lot of tradition. Everything is ornate," Greene said.

Prague is known for its crystal and deep dark red garnet jewelry. Tourists seek out crystal glasses, goblets, candle stick holders and figurines.

Letourneau was less impressed with the coffee. Their coffee is espresso or capuchino. "We asked people to send us coffee," she said.

Ordering from Czech menus was also challenging. Greene was the butt of running jokes.

"I'd order beef stew and what would come would not be beef stew the way I know it. I'd keep waiting. I had problems until I memorized the menu," he said.

A highpoint of the deployment was Greene's promotion to master sergeant. His OIC gave him a BDU shirt with stripes and patches. Greene then spent hours wrestling with the hotel sewing kits sewing his nametag on his new shirt.

But the two supply specialists came home with no complaints. "Rich and I talked about how fortunate we were in the toss of the coin; where we could have gone and where we were, and we just smiled at each other and gave a high five," Letourneau said.

### Westover greeting



**USO volunteer Shirley Demers has a big hug for a 10th Special Forces support soldier returning home to Fort Carson, Col. from duty in northern Iraq.**

— photo by MSgt. W.C. Pope



# First soldiers in war return for round two

by MSgt. Tom Allocco

Veterans of one of America's first military responses to the 9/11 attacks passed through the Westover Passenger Terminal recently for their second tour in the war against terrorism.

Soldiers of the 528<sup>th</sup> Special Operations Support Battalion stopped here while deploying from Fort Bragg, N.C. to the Iraqi Freedom AOR. Their job is to provide supply, engineering, maintenance and other support to special operations forces. Many of them are veterans of the deployment to the airbase dubbed "K-2" in Uzbekistan in support of the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division in October, 2001, just weeks after the 9/11 terror attacks.

While the debris was still being shifted from the World Trade Center and Pentagon attacks, soldiers like fuels specialist SSgt. Ramon Albarran of Aguada, Puerto Rico were on their way to Uzbekistan in support of Task Force Dagger.

K-2 was a former Soviet air field. "There was nothing on the ground but three or four bunkers. We set up tents. C-17s brought in fuel in bladders," Albarran said.

Within days of 9/11, his unit received the "warning order" to be ready. "The first reaction was we were pretty much mad...we were ready to do what we had to do. Once we got on the ground over there, it never stopped. We were pumped until the day we left," he said.

They were in Uzbekistan for two months, followed by duty at Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan.

Albarran now expects to be in the Iraqi Freedom AOR for up to 90 days. "You feel kind of tired, you think back on what happened and the reasons we are going and the adrenalin starts pumping. And that's how everybody feels," the Fort Bragg soldier said.



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

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## Family Support plans childrens' party today

A pajama party will take place tonight from 6-8 p.m. in the grassy area by the Family Support Center.

The Westover Fire Department will bring a fire engine to the party, together with Sparky the Dog and plastic fire hats. An inflatable gym will be featured, as well as refreshments and a clown with animal shaped balloons.

Parents may sign up their children (up to the age of 13) at the center by calling Ext. 3024.

## Pat Stats

Served since Feb. 2, 2003  
5,933 passengers -- 2,050 aircraft  
21,303,519 pounds of cargo  
Info from MSgt. Jim Garrity, 42APS

Meals  
12,532 hot meals served  
Box lunches: 4,917  
Info from MSgt. David Beauregard, 439SVS

Fuel since Feb.1  
13,493,724 gallons of JP-8  
Info from Jim Maloney, Fuels

## June 26 - 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/address: \_\_\_\_\_

Lunch for employer: YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ Lunch 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:

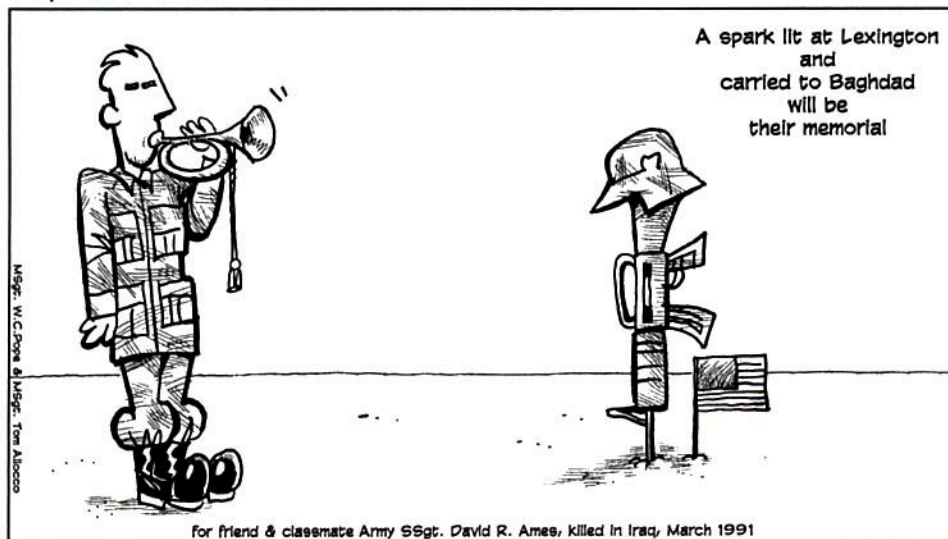
439th Airlift Wing/ Public Affairs, 100 Lloyd St.,  
Westover ARB, Mass. 01022-1825

## Westover women's softball schedule

The Westover Women's Softball Team will play their full schedule the season at Szot Field, Chicopee. Players are wearing shirts purchased by the Air Force Association. Also supporting the softball team is the 439th Services Squadron which paid their league fees.

DAY	DATE	FIELD	TIME	VISITORS	HOME
Wednesday	28 May	Szot 1	6:45	Westover	Market Square
Friday	6 June	Szot 1	5:45	Pete's Dragon	Westover
Wednesday	11 Jun	Szot 2	5:45	Chazzy B's	Westover
Wednesday	18 Jun	Szot 1	5:45	Dugout	Westover
Wednesday	25 Jun	Szot 1	7:00	Ludlow Tech	Westover
Wednesday	2 Jul	Szot 1	5:45	Westover	Pete's Dragon
Wednesday	9 Jul	Szot 1	7:00	Market Square	Westover
Wednesday	16 Jul	Szot 1	7:00	Westover	Chazzy B's
PLAYOFFS	????				

## Express-ions





- ☑ Gen. Handy says Wing can be proud (back page)
- ☑ Army sending troops to build roads in Iraq (back page)
- ☑ Happy 100th, Bob Hope & that's no joke

## "Supersize that Westover Welcome!"



America's favorite meal is a fun part of the welcome home for troops arriving any hour of the day or night at the Westover Passenger Terminal. At left, MSgt. Robert McGraw eats smoke and flips burgers on the grill. USO volunteer Marilyn Spofford serves an 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division soldier. At right, an airborne soldier gives his appraisal of the surprise cook-out. The burgers, hot dogs and sausage are from community donations to the USO.

## Recruiters tapping post 9/11 'sense of service'

by MSgt. Tom Allocco

Go where young people are and you will find that service is in fashion, according to Westover recruiters. Values like service to country carry an added weight that they didn't have just a few years ago. Recruiters say they can see it in the faces of those who come through the door of their offices.

The men and women of the Westover Recruiting Office have a great package of benefits and training to offer. But, lately they are seeing the effectiveness of another great selling point. Potential new wing members want to serve in a large cause, to feel they are part of the national effort since 9/11.

"There has definitely been a cultural shift in the 18- to 24-year-old age range," said CMSgt. Ronald Tyson, Westover Senior Recruiter.

"It's not about money. They talk about service. They want to do something to serve. It's a different mind set. We're trying to tap into this," he said of the efforts to bring prior and non-prior members into the Patriot Wing.

Recruiters who have seen people motivated by a sense of service and patriotism suspect that it may reflect a younger generation turning away from earlier materialism. In recognition, Air Force Reserve recruiting emphasizes camaraderie and personal participation in a great effort. It

tells new members that "First you are a part of it, then it becomes a part of you."

The esteem in which the military uniform is held is seen by the fact that the recommendations of family and teachers are considered the number one influence on why a new member comes to a recruiter. That's ahead of national advertising and referrals from reservists.

When Chief Tyson goes to work in the morning he knows that to a large extent the future of the Patriot Wing rests in the hands of his 10 recruiters spread across New England and New York. There are almost 2,500 men and women in the 439<sup>th</sup> AW, but we are always looking for help. Today, one-third of wing members are eligible to retire, meaning potential gaps in our ranks.

The upsurge in patriotism and the higher profile of the military since the 9/11 terror attacks and the war against terrorism has helped the recruiters. But the recruiters know that the success of the wing depends on their success in getting out the word that there are opportunities here.

You would think that the Westover Recruiters' job would be a breeze. They are standing at the door of some great opportunities that seem to be an easy sell.

They can offer a non-prior service person who has no skills a seat in a tech school to learn, for example, aircraft repair,

medical or air transportation skills. For some career fields, including aerial port, medical and maintenance, they can offer an \$8,000 enlistment bonus for both prior and non-prior service people. Very few civilian jobs offer an unskilled new person that kind of bonus.

The recruiters offer a package that includes pinning on senior airman stripes after tech school, which means UTA pay of about \$150, good pay for anyone just starting out on a new job. Plus, the recruiters have several college assistance programs offering choices to students. In the Maintenance career field, the recruiters can offer prior and non-prior members the opportunity for ART positions. These opportunities for training, educational aid and monthly paychecks come at a time when jobs are hard to find for many and college bills are soaring.

If you look at the benefits, you would think that the hardest part of being a recruiter would be keeping people from knocking down the door. Ironically, the upswing in the desire to serve may have cost the wing some new members. Some potential new members have looked elsewhere rather than wait when there are delays for basic training or tech school slots.

(continued on next page)



## Recruiters... (Cont. from front)

Patriot Wing members are all in uniform voluntarily. They can help the recruiters by letting others know why they choose to wear the uniform. The "Get One" program offers recognition for those who help spread the word about service and benefits.

Chief Tyson would like to see more wing members get to know the Westover recruiter in their community. It's good for the recruiter to feel supported and helps members. "If there's a slot in your shop, wouldn't you want to find someone you'd like to work with?" the Senior Recruiter said.

One thing Chief Tyson and his recruiters share with potential new members is a sense of service.

"I've always enjoyed seeing a young person coming up through the ranks, knowing that I opened the door. It gives you a lot of satisfaction. People know you did a good job and got them in something they like. They bring people to you," Westover's Senior Recruiter said.

The recruiters are at Ext. 2125.

## Army sending troops to build roads in Iraq

An early sign of the American commitment to rebuild Iraq was on display in the Westover Passenger Terminal recently when Army engineers stopped here on their way overseas. While troops are coming home a group of National Guard heavy equipment operators are going to Baghdad to help build infrastructure.

Members of the Wisconsin Army National Guard's 724<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion were activated in March. They are primarily road builders, operating back hoes and front end loaders to clear and build. Others will do plumbing, carpentry and electrical work in Iraq.

The Guardsmen most recently deployed to Nicaragua where they improved roads and built a school and medical clinic.

# PATRIOT express

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

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DSN:589-2020 - (413) 557-2020  
[www.afrc.af.mil/439aw](http://www.afrc.af.mil/439aw)  
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## General Handy says Wing can be proud

*General John W. Handy, commander of Air Mobility Command, recently saluted the performance of the men and women of the Patriot Wing in the national effort in response to 9/11. Following is a letter the AMC commander wrote to Brig. Gen. Martin M. Mazick, 439<sup>th</sup> AW commander.*

The extraordinary contributions of the Air Force Reserve and your organization to the Global War on Terrorism cannot be overstated. Without your support, Operations ENDURING FREEDOM and IRAQI FREEDOM could not have succeeded.

The 439<sup>th</sup> Airlift Wing has long been an essential part of mobility support to the warfighter, but your great people took it to an entirely new level for OIF. In the first four months of this year, you flew 179 missions, including 110 OIF missions carrying more than 5,937 tons of cargo and 2,409 passengers. Also, you supported 619 missions on the ground, including 482 flown by other units. Incredible! You can be proud of your achievements.

Please convey my personal thanks to each member of your unit and accept my best wishes for your continued success.

Sincerely,  
JOHN W. HANDY, General, USAF

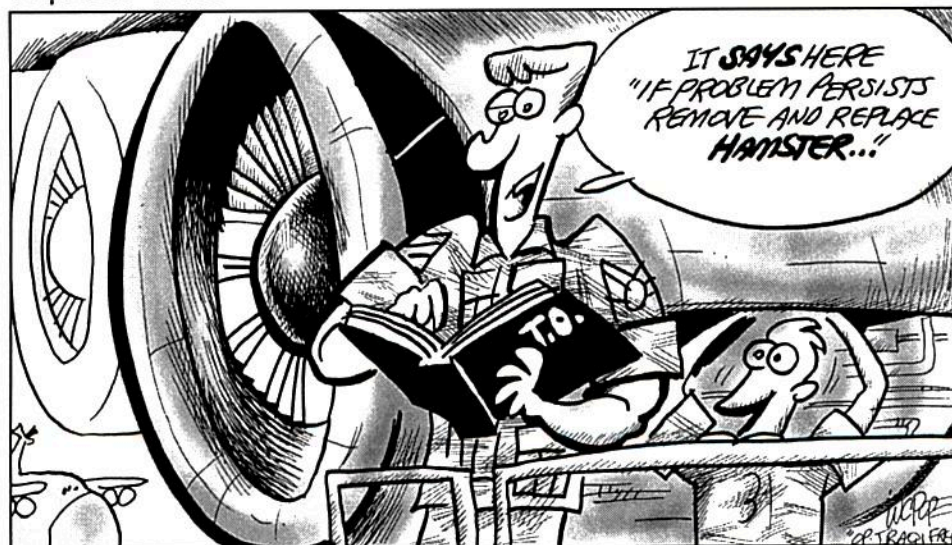
### Pat Stats

Served since Feb. 2, 2003  
6,345 passengers --- 2,195 aircraft  
23,685,245 pounds of cargo  
Info from MSgt. Jim Garrity, 42APS

Meals  
13,457 hot meals served  
Box lunches: 4,929  
Info from MSgt. David Beauregard, 439SVS

Fuel since Feb. 1  
14,972,756 gallons of JP-8  
Info from Jim Maloney, Fuels

## Express-ions



## Split disbursement is now mandatory

by Staff Sgt. A.J. Bosker  
Air Force Print News

All military travelers must now select the split disbursement option on their travel voucher claims to directly pay their government travel card expenses, according to finance officials.

Split disbursement requires travelers to tally up their GTC expenses and authorize enough funds to be sent automatically to Bank of America to pay off their charges, said Michael G. Weber, Air Force travel card program manager at the Pentagon. Any remaining travel settlement will still be sent to the traveler's personal account.

Reservists who have questions on split disbursement can call Daniel McCarthy, Westover financial services officer, at Ext. 3460.

## Top-Up offers school aid

Those eligible for both active duty GI Bill school aid and Tuition Assistance aid may be able to combine both to obtain up to 100 percent reimbursement.

The amount of the benefit of the "Top-Up" program can be equal to the difference between the total cost of a college course and the amount of Tuition Assistance that is paid by the military for the course. Top-Up is a VA program.

Information on Top-Up is available at [www.gibill.va.gov/education/news/tatu.htm](http://www.gibill.va.gov/education/news/tatu.htm). If you have questions, you can call the Education and Training Office at Ext. 3440 or 2042.

## Retirement briefings planned

The next military retirement briefing will be at 9 a.m. Sunday, June 8 in the Wing Headquarters Building.

Other briefings will be held on June 21, July 2 and July 13. To register or for more information, call Ext. 2588.



- ☑ Kurds gave Special Forces a heroes' welcome to cities (back page)
- ☑ Chief Dube delivers Torrington gifts (back page)
- ☑ Air Force Parent Pin Program  
[www.yourguardiansoffreedom.com](http://www.yourguardiansoffreedom.com)

## 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, Ext. 3031

**Fitness Center**  
Monday-Friday, 5:30 a.m.-2 a.m.  
Saturday-Sunday, 8 a.m.-2 a.m.  
Ext. 3958

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

**Westover Consolidated Club**  
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,  
Midnight meals, 10:30 p.m.-1 a.m.  
boxed lunches provided 24/7  
\$3.25 for midnight/box  
for those on per diem  
Ext. 2026/3523

**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.

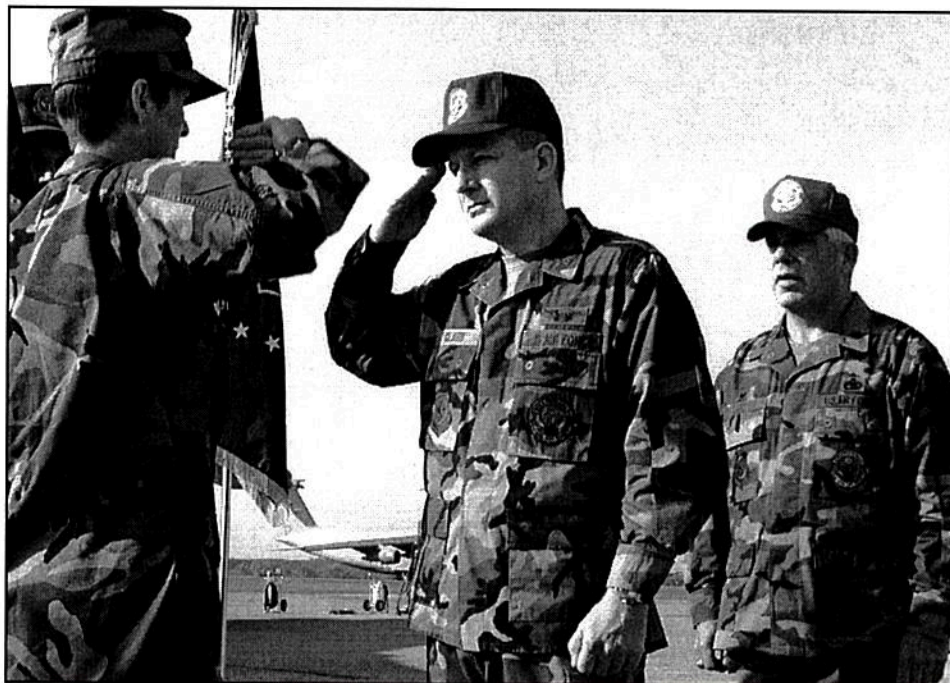
**Base Exchange**  
Monday-Saturday 10 a.m.-5 p.m.  
Sunday 11 a.m.-5 p.m.

**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 & Mondays

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

## Maj. Clark takes command of 42<sup>nd</sup> APS



Maj. Thomas Clark takes command of the 42<sup>nd</sup> APS from Lt. Col. James Carey as he salutes Col. Dana Marsh, 439<sup>th</sup> Mission Support Group commander, during the change of command ceremony held on the flight line on May 30. Carey will retire in June after 28 years of service in the Air Force Reserve.  
—photo by SSgt. Andrew Biscoe

by SSgt. Andrew Biscoe

Maj. Thomas Clark took command of the 42<sup>nd</sup> APS during a change of command ceremony held on the flight line May 30.

Lt. Col. James Carey, a 28-year Air Force Reserve veteran, relinquished command to Col. Dana Marsh, 439<sup>th</sup> Mission Support Group commander with a final and sharp salute.

Carey also delivered a heartfelt farewell speech to his "red hats" squadron that stood in formation in front of him. Emotion choked his voice as he bid goodbye with words that left few dry eyes in the audience.

"Together we have built a team and a family that at this point in time I would match up against any other aerial port — active duty, Guard or Reserve, and we all know who would come out on top," Carey said.

"As I look back over the last seven years, I can truly say I have never worked with a finer group of individuals that have lived up to their squadron motto of "Pride

and Professionalism" as have the members of the 42<sup>nd</sup>."

Carey led the 42<sup>nd</sup> to unprecedented honors earlier this year. Air Mobility Command officials chose the squadron as AMC's best reserve component aerial port for 2002.

Clark's selection as commander followed a stint as officer in charge of the squadron's air terminal operations center. By the end of May, Westover's aerial porters had processed more than 6,340 passengers and more than 23,685,000 pounds of cargo since Feb. 2.

"We thrive on this type of environment," Clark said, adding he is proud of how hard the "red hats" work to make the mission happen. "They love to come out and perform," Clark said.

Carey packed up his Hangar 3 office at his own pace into the late afternoon on Friday, May 30.

"I wanted to wait until the last minute," he said with a smile, as he took a break from loading up some boxes. "It's indicative of the fact that it's over."



## Kurds gave Army a heroes' welcome

by MSgt. Tom Allocco

A heroes' welcome at the Westover Passenger Terminal was the second time around for Special Forces troops who said they had been treated as heroes by the Kurdish people of northern Iraq.

Sixty-three support members of the 10<sup>th</sup> Special Forces Group recently stopped here on their way home to Fort Carson, Col. They had helped the Kurdish forces drive Iraqi forces out of northern Iraq.

The support members had set up a base camp at a former Iraqi air base at Irbil, in the Kurdish area of northern Iraq. Special Forces and the Kurds went on to liberate the cities of Kirkuk and Mosul.

"After Kirkuk fell they put a big banner across the road saying 'U.S. Army Welcome to Kirkuk Our Liberators'. That set the tone. They were very gracious and glad to see us," said Capt. Scott Venema, a 10th Special Forces member from Gloucester.

"There was a statue of Saddam that had already been torn down when I saw it. A week later they rebuilt a state of him made of boots, the symbol of a supreme insult," he said.

In Irbil they went wild when they pulled down the statue of Saddam in Baghdad. They were shooting guns off. I saw a vehicle with an American flag. They were waving it and blowing horns," he said.

The Kurds were appreciative of American help. "I talked to a Turkmenistan man in Kirkuk and asked how the water and electricity were and he said better than in 30 years.

Some of the Special Forces members came home with souvenir Iraqi currency – dinar notes – with Saddam's picture. On the first day of liberation you could buy a stack of dinars in the market for \$3. The next day they were \$11. When the Special Forces left the dinars were \$3 each.

## Letter to Westover

The following letter was written to Brig. Gen. Martin M. Mazick, wing commander, by a squadron commander to express appreciation for the Westover Welcome.

*Gen Mazick, I just wanted to send a quick note of thanks. An old friend of mine, Maj Brent French, is stationed at Westover and passed along your contact information.*

*My team and I rotated through Westover on the 16th of May 2003 back from Kyrgyzstan and en route to Moody AFB, Ga. I had never experienced a reception like the one your senior staff and the volunteers gave us when we landed. The care and effort your base took in receiving us was absolutely spectacular, touched our hearts, and will live in our memories forever.*

*My unit has deployed to seven different countries in support of OEF and OIF (over 400 days since 9-11 for most of us), and never have we had such a warm and hospitable reception.*

*Thank you sir and please pass on our warmest regards to your staff and the volunteers.*

Commander Maj. Craig Allton and the men and women of the 824th Security Forces Squadron, Moody AFB, Ga.

## Six Flags Discount

Six Flags, Agawam, has announced discounts for those in uniform and plans for a free concert to honor the military.

--Single Day Passes for \$22.00

(A savings of \$17.00 per day)

--Season Pass for \$54.99

(A savings of \$12.51 on the Season)

--Midway Meal Deals for \$8.50

The tickets will be available at the Base Fitness Center starting early next week. Call Larry Helmer at Ext. 974 for details.

Six Flags is also planning a Free Lee Greenwood concert in honor of the military in the near future.

## Chief Dube delivers gifts from Torrington

Retired CMSgt. Leonard Dube was back at Westover recently, helping a Connecticut citizens' group show their support for the troops.

Dube helped deliver a stack of boxes of toiletries, snacks and other gifts for troops in the Westover Passenger Terminal. The show of support came from a group of Torrington, Conn. citizens who have organized an Operation Hometown Support.

Dube retired from Transportation after serving many years in the 58<sup>th</sup> APS. He now serves as volunteer Veteran Services Offices for Torrington and also helps coordinate military funeral squads for the area.

## Pin honors parents

You can honor parents or parental figures for their support of your military service with a pin recently issued by the Air Force and a letter of thanks from the chief of staff.

The Parent Pin program gives every Air Force member the opportunity to register online and request a letter of thanks signed by Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. John P. Jumper, together with a lapel pin displaying the letter "P" cradled in the Air Force symbol. To register online, go to [www.yourguardiansoffreedom.com](http://www.yourguardiansoffreedom.com).

## Pat Stats

Served since Feb. 2, 2003  
6,682 passengers -- 2,283 aircraft  
24,617,344 pounds of cargo  
Info from MSgt. Jim Garrity, 42APS

Meals  
14,024 hot meals served  
Box lunches: 4,941  
Info from MSgt. David Beauregard, 439SVS

Fuel since Feb.1  
15,413,090 gallons of JP-8  
Info from Jim Maloney, Fuels

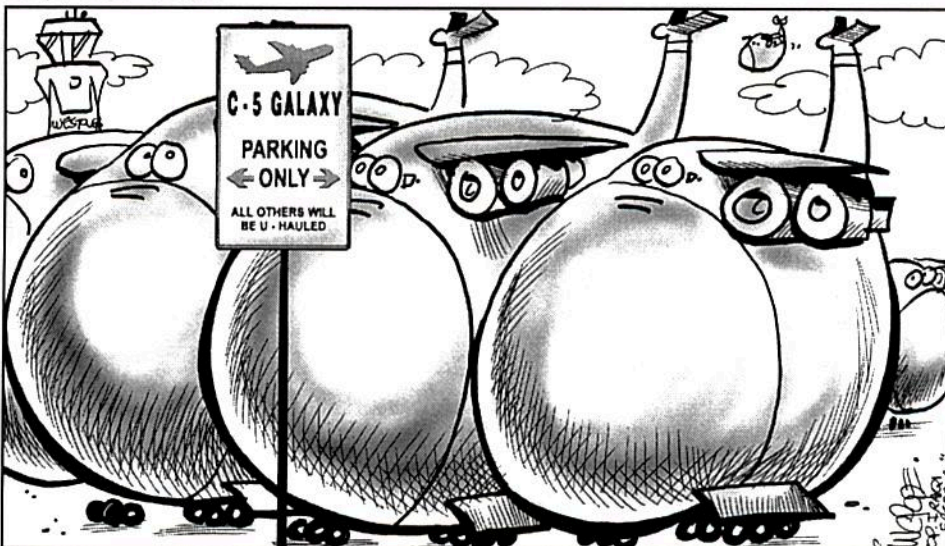
**PATRIOT**  
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(EDITOR'S NOTE: Security guidelines prohibit using last names of deploying reservists.)

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## Express-ions





- ☒ New eagles in 439th AMXS (back page)
- ☒ Wing Honor Guard collects tattered flags (back page)
- ☒ National Flag Day, June 14 - display Old Glory proudly!

## Back from Baghdad



—photo by SSgt. Andrew Bischof



—photo by MSgt. Tom Allocco



—photo by MSgt. Tom Allocco

Twelve security specialists of the 439<sup>th</sup> Security Forces Squadron returned home to their families after two months in Baghdad on Wednesday. From left, Abigail Shameklis doesn't let go of her dad, SSgt. Brian Shameklis, as Cody Shameklis tries out dad's desert BDU hat. SrA. Christopher Beaulieu hugs son, Christopher, while his mother, Aecha looks on. "Daddy, Welcome Home," says the sign held by Sharon Stabile for husband, TSgt. Shane Stabile as he is greeted by son, Mason and daughter, Morgan.

## Aircrews know it's a long way to AOR

by MSgt. Tom Allocco

Being on the front line of the Iraqi Freedom airlift is such serious business that if you didn't speak lightly about it you couldn't keep doing it day after day.

When a 337<sup>th</sup> Airlift Squadron aircrew talks about destinations, they're not going to the Iraqi Freedom AOR, they are going to the "beach", or the "sandbox" or the "big beach." If you are flying empty, you're carrying "sailboat fuel", when you are carrying cargo needed in the AOR, you're "hauling trash." "Crew dogs wearing bags" translates to crew members in flight suits. Sarcasm, humor and understatement will keep you going when you've been eating fast food, waiting for buses, sleeping sitting up and can't remember how many hours from Zulu you are in your current time zone.

"Where are you taking us today, sir," a Patriot Wing aircrew member asked his aircraft commander, Maj. Changkun Moon recently at Ramstein AB, Germany. "We're going to the garden spot," was the answer.

Like a good aircrew member, the aircraft commander stuffed a lot of meaning into an understatement. Understood between the two crew members was that when the bus arrived they would go out to the C-5 and kick off an around-the-clock workday, fly more than 2,500 miles across the Alps, the Mediterranean Sea and desert, land twice at

Iraqi Freedom AOR bases, study charts, worry about the weather, monitor fuel, engine and electric gauges, wrestle with maintenance problems, unload and load tons of cargo and then wait in the dark somewhere for another bus to take them to a barracks to try to get some sleep to be strong enough to do it all again. And that was only if everything went right.

There was nothing special about the recent seven-day mission of Moon and his augmented crew of 12 others. They were a cross section of all the 337<sup>th</sup> AS crews. It was one more mission in a series that started when a Westover crew flew emergency vehicles from California to New York City on Sept. 11, 2001 before Enduring Freedom had a name.

Moon wears an Enduring Freedom patch on his flight jacket. In the month before the mission he had flown down range four times. During one 20-day period he clocked 130 flying hours.

"It builds on you after a while," he said. Of the effect on his wife, daughter and son, he said, "on an airline they always know where you are...they know within a few

hours when you will be home. On stage missions they don't know when you are coming home."

"A good stick, good hands," is how MSgt. Paul Benson, loadmaster, expresses respect for the flying abilities of the aircraft commander.

"He takes care of his people...all our pilots are like that, right along with the crew. People in the squadron respect each other for their competence," he said. "And don't forget SMSgt. Karen Scott's admin section...the administrators work hard...they make sure everything's covered," Benson said.

Of the mission, he says, "it's long days, but we know people depend on us...so it's kind of rewarding at the same time...there's a lot of camaraderie."

The aircrew covers a range of experience. Benson came to Westover 29 years ago, flying C-123s. "It seems like yesterday," 2nd Lt. David Quinn came out of C-5 school in January.

After a year and a half of training to be

(continued on next page)



Loadmaster SrA. Jeffrey Gilbert shows the strain of a long workday.



## Aircrews... (Cont. from front)

pilot, he is still impressed by the professionalism of the enlisted aircrew members. "These guys here know so much about the airplane, it's incredible how much they know," he said of air crew members who were flying Just Cause and Desert Storm missions while he was in high school in Plymouth.

Capt. Allyn Taylor flew UH-60 helicopters for eight years in the Army and HA 60s for four years in the Air Force. From 1998 to 2001 he flew Northern Watch search and rescue missions in Turkey. This is his first operational flight as a C-5 pilot. Like Quinn, he is awed by the magnitude of the new job. The flight engineers and the loadmasters have to know an amazing amount...the complexity is incredible. One of my goals at Altus was to know the engines like a flight engineer. I didn't realize how big a task that would be," Taylor said.

Learning never stops. MSgt. Tom Mellor is undergoing a periodic evaluation of the loadmaster skills he has practiced since 1986. SMSgt. Garth Parker peppers him with questions during upload, download, preflight, through flight, post flight. "Being an aircrew member is not the life of Riley," says Mellor.

Meanwhile, MSgt. Chris Maille, 19 years' service, shadows SrA. Jeff Gilbert, fresh out of C-5 school. "Latch the strap. Pop the strap. Start it over. All right that's good," he instructs as part of OJT.

Maille moves among the pallets, eyeing them expertly, with no wasted movement, spotting a broken lock, rechainning a load that is not delivered to the plane to his satisfaction.

On the flight deck, flight engineer SMSgt. Glenn Flynn checks and double checks the thrust in an engine. He checks the history of the engine and consults with SMSgt. Ken Gilbert. Maintenance is called to fix a problem with the autopilot.

Just before takeoff there is a drop in the noise level when the air conditioning is turned off. "Starting number one," Moon says, and presses a red button which opens

## New eagles in maintenance squadron



Lt. Col. Daniel Allen, 439th AMXS commander, receives his colonel's eagles from his wife, Lesley, and Brig. Gen. Martin M. Mazick, 439th AW commander on June 4. The pin-on ceremony was held in Hangar 9.

—photo by  
SSgt. Andrew Biscoe

a valve which starts the first engine. Capt. Gregg Southworth sits to his right. "Starting number two," Moon says and the rumble increases another level.

It's part of the rhythm of the workday. "It's long days. You don't know where your next meal is going to come from. It's a treat getting a chance to go to the commissary," said TSgt. Mark Schmitter. TSgt. Carlos

Correa recently spent 21 similar days in an Iraqi Freedom stage. "It's been almost two years we've been doing this. It's now almost normal. What would not be normal to others — a 24 hour day — is normal to us," says Correa.

## Wing Honor Guard collects tattered flags

The Westover Honor Guard is accepting unserviceable American flags for a ceremonial Proper Retirement burning which will be held in September.

The surge of patriotism across our Nation has caused many flags to be displayed for long periods and they are consequently worn out and should be replaced. All Americans will honor the flag on National Flag Day, June 14, which was originally known as the Flag Birthday.

You may drop off your unserviceable flags in the clearly marked box at the Westover Honor Guard Building. For more information, call MSgt. Tom Roe at Ext. 3342.

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Meals  
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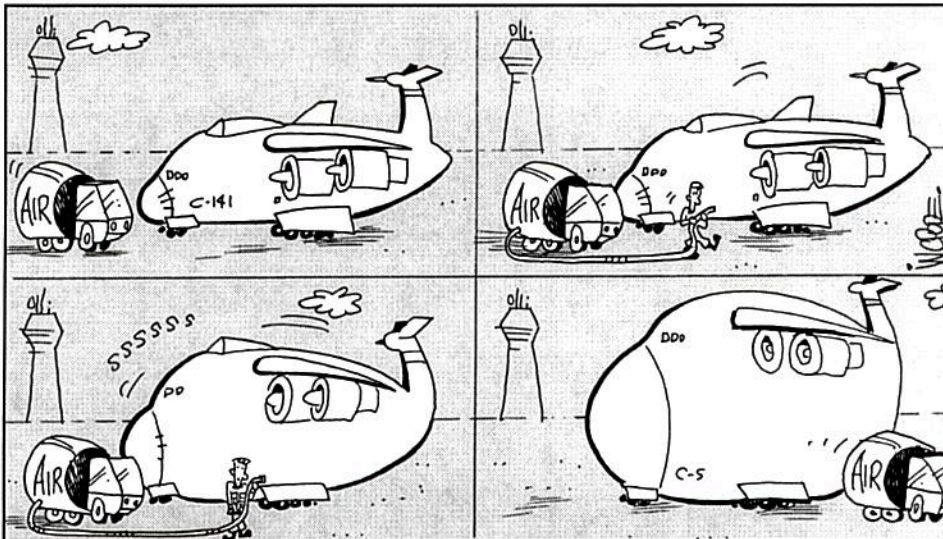


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DSN:589-2020 - (413) 557-2020  
www.afrc.af.mil/439aw  
439patriot.editor@westover.af.mil

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### Express-ions





✓ Maj. Timothy S. Donnelly earns Bronze Star (photo on back)

✓ Sixth Marines return for quick turnaround (back)

✓ In 1911, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Henry H. "Hap" Arnold soloed in a Wright Flyer after 2 ½ hours in the air and was awarded his wings after 3 hours and 48 minutes of flying.

## "Local" tests pilots' proficiency and precision with air refueling

Article and photos  
by SSgt. Andrew Biscoe

The weekly training missions that send the signature howl and roar of the Air Force's largest aircraft into the skies over western Massachusetts are planned each week to keep aircrews with the 337<sup>th</sup> Airlift Squadron proficient.

That means that the men and women of the squadron not only practice repeated touch-and-goes, they must take part in an air refueling mission. That's when they have to nestle a half a million pounds of C-5 underneath a KC-135 tanker.

On a recent rainy Thursday evening, an aircrew with a wealth of C-5 experience took to the skies for the "local" as it is known by anyone familiar with flight operations at Westover. Maj. Vito Addabbo flew in the right seat. His job as instructor pilot was to monitor the aircraft commander's handling of the aircraft. Aircraft commander for the flight was Maj. Bill Rolocut, who has flown C-5s through the 16 years the Galaxies have been assigned to Westover.

Another pair of experienced eyes were those of Lt. Col. Ken Riley, who flew in the jump seat as evaluator pilot. "Bill's getting a check ride," Riley said, "and I'm administering it." Riley has flown C-5s for 19 years. That kind of experience literally put him front and center with the entire operation of the night's mission. Riley sat in the seat in between the pilots.

"I know everything that's going on, however something new happens all of the time," he said. "We had an airplane divert into Cypress (recently) with a gear problem.

I've never seen that before."

Riley said his favorite aspect of flying C-5s was probably the space the Galaxy takes up in the air. "Maybe the size and comfort ... its stability - probably the best," he said. Pilots who fly the C-5 must have a minimum of a takeoff, landing and approach every month. Minimum requirements call for an air

refueling every month as well, Riley said.

The June mission began at about 7:30 p.m. "Rodd 99 heavy" was the call sign used. "Heavy" is used to alert other pilots that the biggest aircraft in America now rules the skies.

After Rodd 99 was cleared for takeoff, Rolocut and Addabbo circled the area and took the huge airlifter back home. They returned to fly a practice approach to Runway 23 at Westover.

"MINIMUM. MINIMUM," a human voice boomed in from the cockpit. The voice is activated electronically as the C-5 flies closer to the ground.

The huge General Electric turbofan engines roared as the aircraft approached Westover. Then, when it looked like the aircraft might land, the pilots banked the Galaxy to the left. Houses in Granby and Ludlow were easily visible below.

"Keep your eyes out and call my turn," Rolocut told Addabbo. Nothing happens in the cockpit without thorough checklists.



Maj. Vito Addabbo, instructor pilot with the 337<sup>th</sup> Airlift Squadron, runs through a final checklist while adjusting dials and controls in the cockpit.

There is constant conversation over the pilots' intercom system. The pilots set up for a low approach to Runway 33, the shorter runway.

The force of the engines - each rated at 41,000 pounds of thrust - pushed the pilots back in their seats. Rolocut took the C-5 into a climb. The mission was now on its way to meet up with "Pack 11," the call sign for the Pease Air Guard KC-135. They were scheduled to rendezvous over New Hampshire at about 24,000 feet.

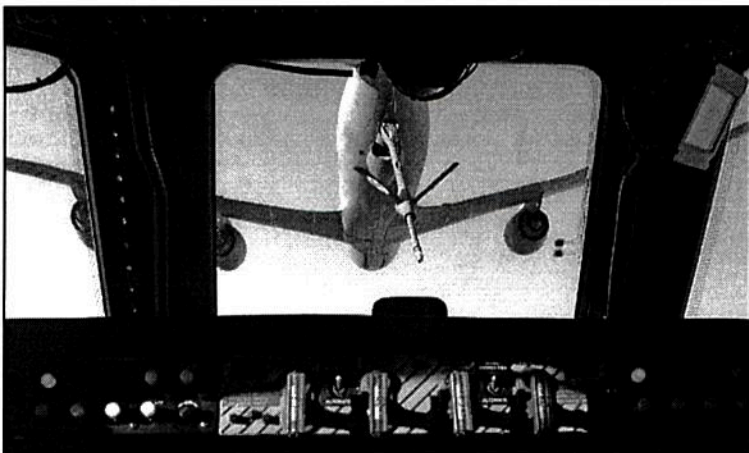
The C-5 gained altitude while clouds and fog briefly obscured a view of the winding Connecticut River thousands of feet below. The Galaxy rose above the clouds and surged above 13,000 feet. The clouds and rain disappeared below, and the sun shone through the side of the cockpit.

Crew members ran through their pre-air refueling checklist. They began looking for the tanker on the horizon. Soon the two aircraft were 10 miles apart and closing. In just a matter of a minute or two, the KC-135's airframe was parallel with the C-5. Rolocut and Addabbo nudged the Galaxy closer. The boom operator on the tanker began extending the KC-135's signature fuel nozzle.

Airmanship got its test as Rolocut and Addabbo eased the Galaxy underneath the engines of the KC-135. Between 9 and 12 feet separated the two huge aircraft.

"Latched," the boom operator called out. The hook-up was confirmed by a firm thump which rumbled the cockpit. A long tube with JP-8 fuel flowing through it held the two aircraft together over New England.

(continued on next page)



The C-5 eases up to the awaiting KC-135R Stratotanker, flown by the New Hampshire Air National Guard of Pease ANGB, N.H.



## Refueling... (Cont. from front)

Addabbo coached Rolocut. Riley said this was a practice offload of fuel. "For practice you just get a token (offload)," he said. "Less than a thousand pounds."

The pilots watched intently ahead. They maneuvered the throttles while maintaining stability with a gentle wake and bump in the air from the KC-135 in front. "Very nice, Rolo," a crew member said to Rolocut on the intercom; a compliment meant in its entirety. All things considered it was remarkable, though routine, with what this training mission involved thousands of feet above the clouds. "There are three-quarters of a million pounds of aircraft moving along here," Addabbo said.

Maj. Tom Maurer was the fourth pilot on board for the mission. The pilots rotated through the left seat for a crack at the few minutes connected to the 290,000-pound Stratotanker, just 20 feet away in the sky. Each time someone else moved into the left seat, Addabbo confirmed the C-5 always was in control of the crew. "Co-pilot's airplane," he announced on the intercom.

Turbulence plays a big role in deciding whether air refueling can happen, Riley said. "We're not allowed to do this in moderate turbulence, and it's difficult in light turbulence."

The KC-135 steadily led the way, its boom extended as the two big planes went into a turn in formation. This was precision flying at its best.

"You guys are good," Addabbo told the Pease tanker crew. "Thanks for all of the work tonight."

Flight engineers MSgt. Bruce Szepek and TSgt. Chris McCurdy kept their eyes on making sure the C-5 was going where it was supposed to.

With the air refueling completed, the Galaxy descended through the clouds back to Westover. Rolocut ran through checklists and eased the throttles of the aircraft. The runway soon appeared in the dark like a huge lit up rectangle.

Rolocut eased the C-5 smoothly down

onto the wet runway. The power of the thrust reversers shook the aircraft. Once the aircraft reached its parking spot, maintainers quickly swarmed to inspect it.

His favorite part of flying the C-5 is its long range. "I like to travel around the world," he said. Rolocut looks forward to when the C-5s get their scheduled engine and avionics modifications. "Then it'll be really interesting to fly," he said. "We'll have a lot more thrust and more fuel efficiency. I hope it happens before I retire. I think four next year are getting done. That's the start of the process. I'll be around awhile."

## Sixth Marines return for quick turnaround

by MSgt Tom Allocco

Members of the Sixth Marines, 2nd Marine Division, Camp Lejeune, N.C., recently passed through the Westover Passenger Terminal as one stop on a long road from the Mediterranean to Iraq to Okinawa. The Marines, just home from Iraqi Freedom, are already planning to deploy to Okinawa for three months.

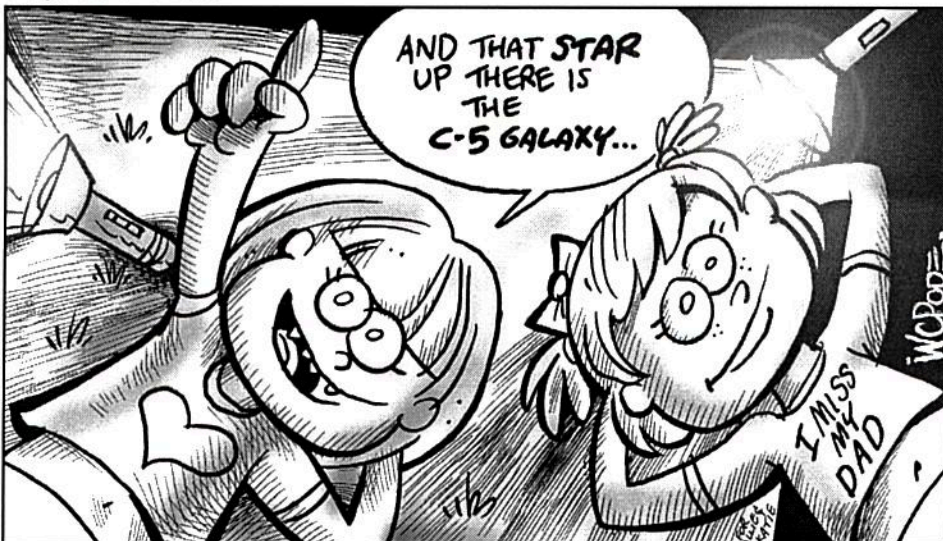
The Sixth Marines, members of a regiment which was formed just in time to gain battle honors at Belleau Wood in 1918, provided security at a base camp near Iraq. When the war started, they set up a prisoner of war camp.

The camp stayed mostly empty, when the Iraqi military dissolved and went home, one of the Marines said. Many of the Iraqis threw down their weapons and took off their uniforms rather than fight, he said.

The Marines' last duty was guarding an airfield about 30 miles from Baghdad.

The Marines went to the Iraqi Freedom AOR only a few months after coming home from a "Med Float", a deployment on ships to the Mediterranean Sea in 2002. They are now planning to be at home only until August, when they will go Okinawa for three months of training.

## Express-ions



## Westover Star



Bronze Star recipient Maj. Timothy S. Donnelly, Chief of Force Protection, 439th SFS, with his wife, Jane, and daughter, Laura, at the June 7 Commander's Call. He earned the award for a tour of duty in Afghanistan from January to July 2002. This is the first time in 10 years a Westover reservist has earned the Bronze Star.

## Movie tickets on sale

Westover Four Seasons is selling discounted movie tickets for \$7 which can be used at area Showcase Cinema Theaters.

The tickets are on sale in the gym. For more information, call Larry Helmer at Four Seasons at Ext. 2974.

## Pat Stats

Served since Feb. 2, 2003

7,254 passengers -- 2,432 aircraft  
27,258,653 pounds of cargo  
Info from MSgt. Jim Garrity, 42APS

### Meals

14,502 hot meals served  
Box lunches: 5,020  
Info from MSgt. David Beauregard, 439SVS

### Fuel since Feb.1

16,353,825 gallons of JP-8  
Info from Jim Maloney, Fuels

# PATRIOT express

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Security guidelines prohibit using deploying reservist's last names)

Contact us:  
DSN:589-2020 - (413) 557-2020  
www.afrc.af.mil/439aw  
439patriot.editor@westover.af.mil

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