Air Force Ball

Westover celebrates Air Force’s 60th with military ball.

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Illustration by Senior Airman Michael Lanza
RAMPING UP >> A Rodeo maintainer marshals in a Westover C-5 during the 2000 competition. Westover will participate in this year’s competition at McChord Air Force Base, Wash., July 21-28. Look for coverage of the results in the September Patriot.
EDITORIAL | Answering the call — past, present and future

Brig. Gen. Wade Farris
439th Airlift Wing Commander

Six years. That is longer than many of you have been in the 439th Airlift Wing or the military for that matter. However, as of September that is how long we will have been engaged in the Global War on Terror. And make no mistake, Westover, as part of the Total Force, continues to play a major role in this war.

Since 2001 we activated over 1,000 Airmen and deployed hundreds. And today over 250 of our people are on active duty orders. Our aircrew has flown Army, Navy and Marine personnel and equipment to strategic positions all over the globe. Air Force reservists fly as much as 20 percent of C-5 equipment to strategic positions all over the globe.

If you continue to fly C-5 missions you will have flown Army, Navy and Marine personnel and equipment to strategic positions all over the globe.

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Every one of you volunteered to enter the armed forces and every one of you volunteered to serve in the Air Force Reserve. While there are many reasons Airmen join the military, I would venture to guess the majority of you signed up because you have an innate sense of duty to the United States and a calling to protect the lives of the innocent.

Next month as we celebrate the Air Force’s 60-years as its own distinct branch of the U.S. military, it is vital that I point out the importance of your consistent, “above and beyond” volunteerism. Your willingness to serve in extreme conditions, away from your loved ones and in an environment that may literally be foreign to you is critical to this Wing’s success and ultimately to the Nation’s defense. Without your dedication, courage and sacrifice the Air Force cannot ensure our Nation meets its objectives both here and abroad.

Many of you are familiar with Westover’s history but for those who are not let me sum it up by saying that this base has played a major role in every conflict since it was established in the early 1940s. From WWII through Korea, Vietnam, Desert Shield and Storm and now through today’s war, we have been there. And since 1973 that role has been filled by citizen Airmen like you.

From its birth to today, Westover always answers the call of duty and always in a way that highlights just how outstanding we are. Our reputation as a first-class organization is made possible by our dedicated, superior performers.

Whether you have been a part of the Westover family for 30 years or have just recently joined us, being part of a unit like the 439th is something of which you can be immensely proud and should celebrate from time to time. In fact, we are hosting a military ball on Sept. 8 to celebrate 60 years of Air Force heritage. I strongly encourage you to attend to be a part of this event so we can recognize the contributions YOU have made to this heritage.

Thank you for the sacrifices that you and your families make every day. And thank you for the outstanding job you do getting the mission accomplished. We cannot do it without you. And remember, nothing can stop the U.S. Air Force!

AF week in August

A flurry of local events will mark the state’s Air Force week in August.

The Thunderbirds Air Demonstration Squadron will headline the Cape Cod Air Show 2007 at Otis Air National Guard Base, Mass. Saturday and Sunday, Aug. 25-26. Gates will open both days at 8 a.m.

The Golden Knights Army parachute demonstration team will also be featured at the air show.

The Air Force performing group, Tops in Blue, will be at Forest Park in Springfield at 5 p.m. on Aug. 24.

The 60th anniversary of the Air Force will be the theme at the Wings of Hope Air Show to be hosted at Pease ANGB, Portsmouth, N.H. on Saturday and Sunday, Aug. 18-19. The air show will include the Air Force Honor Guard Drill Team. Details on other participants were not available at publication time.

TRICARE Prime available for Reservists

US Family Health Plan is a TRICARE Prime option available to families of active duty military, family members of National Guard and Reserves (activated more than 30 days, or AGR), as well as to military retirees and their eligible family members. A valued partner of the U.S. Department of Defense, US Family Health Plan is a permanent part of the military health system, and has cared for military families for 25 years through six nonprofit organizations around the nation. Locally, US Family Health Plan currently serves thousands of military families in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, portions of southern New Hampshire, and portions of northern Connecticut.

Volleyball raises funds for Military Ball

The senior NCOs of the Top 3 Council are challenging all comers in a volleyball tournament on Saturday, Aug. 11 of the ‘A’ UTA to raise funds for Westover’s upcoming 60th Anniversary of the Air Force Military Ball. Volleyball teams representing the Company Grade Officer Council and the 439th Security Forces Squadron have already accepted the challenge. Games will be played in the field behind the Westover Club, with team registration between 4:30 and 5 p.m. The charge will be $5 per person and include volleyball, hamburgers, hot dogs, chips and desert. Take-out beverages will be available for purchase in the Club. The fun will include horseshoes and boom-box music. Coins, tee shirts and more from Westover units will be on sale. For more information about playing or selling merchandise, call Master Sgt. Theresa M. Robert at Ext. 3317

Wing names third quarter winners

Westover’s Quarterly Awards Board has selected the following third quarter award winners for their outstanding contributions to the wing mission:


Web site offers news

The official Westover web site is a convenient reference resource for anyone seeking information about the base. The official site can be reached at www.westover.afrc.af.mil.
Westover kicks off AF 60th with military ball in Sept.

by Master Sgt. Tom Allocco

Military tradition, distinguished guests and elegant dining and dancing appropriate for a once-in-a-career celebration will be the setting for the 60th Anniversary of the Air Force Military Ball on the evening of Saturday, Sept. 8.

Everyone in the Patriot Wing family of military, civilians and guests is invited to share a rare opportunity to celebrate the birthday of the Air Force in a formal affair steeped in tradition. Westover last hosted a formal military ball in 1990.

The tone of the evening will be set by mess dress for chief master sergeants and officers and choice of mess dress or semi-formal wear uniform for enlisted men and women. The semi-formal wear uniform consists of the Class A uniform with white shirt and blue bow tie. Enlisted women, below the rank of chief master sergeants, may choose formal gowns. Uniform rentals are available commercially.

The guest of honor table will be headed by guest speaker Maj. Gen. Allan R. Poulin, vice commander of Air Force Reserve Command. General Poulin's distinguished career spans 37 years, beginning as an F-4 Phantom pilot at Da Nang, Vietnam and including 450 combat hours.

The Air Force Band of Liberty of Hanscom AFB, Mass. will help transform the Base Hangar into a ballroom. Following a formal meal intended to be memorable, the Air Force will perform a range of music for an evening of dancing.

Tying together every event of the Military Ball will be a celebration of Air Force tradition.

“The Air Force is 60 years old, and we will mark its birthday with formal customs and protocol steeped in tradition going back hundreds of years. A Military Ball pays tribute to the past and reaffirms a commitment to build on what has come before,” said Maj. Patrick S. Ryan, deputy commander of the 439th Mission Support Group.

As an organizer of the ball, Major Ryan noted that the evening will also be an opportunity to celebrate Westover’s place of honor in Air Force history. It started when the first B-17 Flying Fortress landed at the Army Air Corps Westover Field on June 10, 1941.

“Westover’s history mirrors our Air Force’s history. Westover has gone from training base and assembly point for European-bound bombers and fighters to Air Transport Command base supporting the Berlin Airlift, to Strategic Air Command home of B-52s to Military Airlift Command staging point for the Desert Storm and Shield airlift, and finally to today’s worldwide support of the war on terrorism. We will celebrate that history and the people who made it possible,” Major Ryan said.

Tickets for the 60th Anniversary of the Air Force Military Ball are available starting at $55 each. Electronic tickets have been mailed to everyone with a Westover e-mail address. Tickets or more information about the Military Ball can also be obtained by calling Major Ryan at Ext. 3044, Chief Master Sgt. Kathy Wood at Ext. 2876 or Senior Airman Stephanie Ellis at Ext. 3011. Tickets may also be purchased from any first sergeant.
Former SPECOPS pilot takes helm at OG

by Capt. Justin Manna

Col. Udo K. McGregor passed the 439th Operations Group command to Col. James M. Linder during a change-of-command ceremony at the Base Hanger on Saturday July 7 of the July ‘A’ UTA.

The new 439th group commander came to Westover from 22nd Air Force, Dobbins Air Reserve Base, Georgia — where he served as chief of standardization and evaluations.

Colonel Linder is a former special operations pilot who literally wrote the book, a 200-page-training guide, on the C-130 Combat Talon during his time as an instructor at Hurlbert Field, Florida.

“I understand the importance. I understand the gravity. I look forward to working with you to collectively accomplish our mission. Your reputation is the finest,” said Colonel Linder, upon accepting command.

Colonel McGregor agreed, expressing his belief that his last three years at Westover had been the most successful of his career and reflected the work and success of the 439th Operations Group.

“We are the envy of the Air Force...the best I have ever seen... I owe you,” he said in his farewell address.

A highlight of the ceremony was Colonel McGregor’s recognition as an honorary Chief Master Sergeant. The announcement was made by Command Chief Master Sgt. Zigmund D. Skawski and presented by Chief Master Sgt. Joseph J. Cullen, president of the 439th Chiefs’ Council.

During the induction ceremony the Chiefs recognized Colonel McGregor as one of the greatest proponents for the well-being of enlisted Airmen through his efforts to improve morale and quality-of-life issues at Westover. Colonel McGregor’s recognition was the first time a group commander has received designation.

Colonel McGregor left Westover to assume command of the 910th Airlift Wing located at Youngstown Air Reserve Station, Ohio.

Lt. Col. Charles D. Carroll also joined the operations group as the new deputy commander.

Air Force streamlines OPR and EPR process

WASHINGTON (AFPN) — Air Force officials are introducing new officer and enlisted evaluation forms as it transforms its personnel processes.

The major part of this effort has been directed at reducing the workload associated with preparing officer and enlisted performance reports while ensuring the evaluation process remains fair and provides for accurate portrayal of performance.

The change also includes the much anticipated addition of physical fitness documentation to both evaluation and feedback forms.

Although the Air Force used a competency based performance evaluation and feedback process, the changes to the evaluation forms make them a more user-friendly, value-added product that accurately reflects an Airman’s performance.

Both the officer and enlisted performance reports were shortened and technologically enhanced to decrease the time required to accomplish the report.

On performance feedback worksheets, performance assessment areas are now evaluated on a standardized criterion using “Does not Meet,” “Meets,” “Above Average” and “Clearly Exceeds” criterion.


Questions should be directed to HQ AFPC/DPPPEP, evaluations programs management branch at DSN 665-2571 or e-mail at AFPC.DPPPE@randolph.af.mil.

The Westover Military Personnel Flight members will be holding training in August to cover this new program. For more information, please call Ext. 3874.

New CC at 337th

The men and women of the 337th Airlift Squadron welcomed their new commander when Lt. Col. Vito E. Addabbo accepted the flag from Lt. Col. Louis M. Shogy.

Colonel Shogy has accepted a position with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in Albany, NY.

Colonel Addabbo formerly served as Reserve chief pilot of the 337th.

In accepting command of the squadron, Colonel Addabbo saluted the achievements of his predecessor and promised to emphasize accomplishing the mission while keeping safety a top priority.
Westover athlete Senior Airman Rick Marrama recently set a new record in the power lifting bench press event for his weight class. The Patriot Wing power lifter benched 620 pounds in the 198-pound weight class during a local open class American Power Lifting Association meet. This feat broke the previous record of 600 pounds.
Senior Airman Rick Marrama warms up with light weights at the Westover Fitness Center. Airman Marrama is a competitive-power lifter, who recently set a record for his weight class, benching 620 pounds.

(photo by Senior Airman Michael Lanza)
Airman Marrama is a lifetime drug-free athlete, meaning he has never used steroids or drugs to enhance his training. He said he travels from his home in Leominster to his gym in Worcester for training three times a week.

“I try to work on different things during my training, but my focus is on benching,” he said.

The 439th Maintenance Squadron air reserve technician also watches his diet to make sure he’s getting plenty of proteins and not too many carbohydrates. He said he’s tried supplements such as creatine and protein shakes, but has found his diet is the best way to get the nutrition he needs.

Another reason Airman Marrama said he watches what he eats is to make sure he remains in the appropriate weight class. Before weigh-ins he has a routine that includes up to three hours in a sauna.

Now that he has broken the 600 pound record, Airman Marrama said he is working towards lifting 700 pounds at the 198 pound weight class.

Airman Marrama is currently sponsored by a company that provides him with his lifting shirts, but he is currently seeking more sponsors to support his training and competing. It can be a real challenge at times between balancing his Air Force job and his training. He said he has to take leave and pay for all his expenses out-of-pocket.

Airman Marrama has been competing for more than 10 years in various events, winning competitions and setting records. In 2005, he placed first in a World Bench Meet in Reno, Nev. During high school, he won at the national level four times and has won numerous times at local and national competitions. By pressing 620 pounds, he surpassed his own goal of benching 600 pounds.

“Airman Marrama said he is working towards lifting 700 pounds.”
Nineteen Patriot Wing aerial porters are moving cargo and passengers in the war on terrorism in a part of the world where the desert sun is a relentless enemy that can drain your strength while making every task more difficult and dangerous.

Men and women of the 85th Aerial Port Squadron of Hanscom AFB, Mass. have been at the desert base since May supporting Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom. That’s long enough to see the summer heat climb and stay in mind numbing triple digits.

Senior Master Sgt. Steven Meltzer, team chief of the deployed aerial porters, described the conditions as something never seen in New England. “It gets up above 110 on most days and will hit 120,” he said. For aerial porters on a flightline of hard surfaces and metal aircraft, the temperature can climb another 10 degrees.

“The heat is the biggest battle. You have to always be aware of what it can do to you and take precautions. There are water trucks and sheds of water bottles everywhere and signs with safety messages. During the worst of it, supervisors follow a work cycle of 20 or 30 minutes and then have people rest out of the sun. Sometimes you can’t do that if you’ve got to get the mission done,” he said.

By July the deployed aerial porters also had experienced three or four sandstorms, which Sergeant Meltzer described as causing a gritty sand version of a nor’easter white-out.

The aerial porters are serving Air Expeditionary Force tours with the 386th Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron projected to continue into September. They are doing the full range of aerial port jobs, including the Air Terminal Operations Center (ATOC), passenger, cargo and ramp operations. The Patriot Wing aerial porters represent one of 18 Air Force-wide units running the port operations.

“The best strategy is to keep busy. You fall into a routine of work, exercise and rest,” Sergeant Meltzer said.

“We say ‘it’s not the greatest place to be, but we’re keeping spirits up.’ I can’t say enough about the positive attitude,” he said.

Employers receive insight into military life

by Tech. Sgt. Andrew Biscoe

BDUs and a mobility line greeted the bosses who “deployed” to Westover during the July A UTA. A line of bosses filed out the door to the Westover Club to “in-process” for the annual Employer Day held July 7. Their employees – more than 30 reservists – also welcomed the group as the bosses received mobility folders, shot records and other vital information before their welcome from Brig. Gen. Wade Farris, 439th Airlift Wing commander.

As the bosses ate lunch with the reservists, they received “intelligence” that the deployment was taking place in a high-threat area of the world. To be prepared for this, employers applied their skills at donning JSLIST chemical warfare ensembles.

The employers heard about military life from a veteran reservist who recently deployed to Afghanistan and Iraq. Chief Master Sgt. Donald Martel, 42nd Aerial Port Squadron, credited his boss, James Muri, for his support.

Mr. Muri was among 28 of the employers who flew aboard a Westover C-5 for an hour-long trip over the hook of Cape Cod and along the southern Connecticut coast before it returned to Westover.

Besides the C-5 flight, the employers also toured the reservists’ workplaces, the control tower, and the isochronal inspection (ISO) area, before returning to the club for an afternoon mixer.

“It was truly an afternoon I won’t forget,” said Dennis Sciarrino, employer of Senior Airman Ma-rina R. Buie, 439th Logistics Readiness Squadron. “Thank you for a wonderful day and the insight to the inner workings of the base.”

Marine change of command

A change of command recently took place with one of Westover’s major tenant units.


Colonel Warbeck was commissioned in July 1988. He transferred to the Selected Marine Corps Reserve in 1995 and was assigned to MASS-6.

Colonel Warbeck has served tours of duty in Operations Southern Watch, Iraqi Freedom, and Enduring Freedom.

More than 400 active-duty and reserve Marines are assigned to the base.
PATRIOT PEOPLE |

NAME: Gerald Dufresne
RANK: Tech. Sgt.
HOMETOWN: Ashford, CT
UNIT: 439th AW/HC
POSITION: NCOIC Base Chapel
CIVILIAN POSITION: Police Officer
FAVORITE FOOD: Pizza
YEARS OF SERVICE: 11
FAVORITE SPORT: Hockey
FAVORITE HOBBY: Motorcycles
IDEAL VACATION: Somewhere on the beach
BEST WAY TO RELAX: Spa
PREFERRED ENTERTAINMENT: Movies
FAVORITE HERO: Paul Newman
FAVORITE MUSIC STYLES: 80's music
FAVORITE MOVIE: Uncle Buck
FAVORITE AIRCRAFT: F-86 Sabre
PET Peeve: Large crowds of people
WHAT WOULD I DO IF I WON $1 MILLION: Relax

PATRIOT PUNS |

 PATRIOT PRAISES |

Chiefs recently inducted
Chief master sergeant
Olivia K. Eason
Kurt C. Kohler
David A. Mollor
Michael J. Sullivan

Reenlistments
Chief Master Sgl.
Catherine J. Skalecki

Senior master sergeant
Gary Philip Bisson

James P. Ganity
Andrew P. McGovern
Vikki J. Stokes
Stephan J. Gusan
Michael R. Bellerose
McDonald R. Molina
Sean R. Powell

Master sergeant
James M. Bowler
Wayne A. Rehnberg
Andrew T. Rivet
James P. Scott
Dennis J. Vight

Phaly S. Walker
Robert J. Walker
Antonio Demarco
Daniel R. Ejdys
Richard W. Gheen
Leslie J. Hunter
William A. Mackey
Irving Little
Shane Newhart
Robert S. Rodriguez

Technical sergeant
Roy A. Agpaoo
James F. Anthony
Kevin R. Blake
Christopher W. Crowningshield
Kevin P. Godbout
Allen J. Guiel Jr.
Gregory S. Levangie
Daniel P. O'Flaterby
Michael J. Rochon
Chelsey A. Stead
Andrew J. Tynik
David A. Williams
Victor Wong
Cynthia J. Harris
Scott A. Macnevins
Peter J. Murphy
David N. Padgett
Elizabeth A. Sanford

http://www.af.mil/library/usaf60.asp
SMOKE HOUSE >> Wayne Wood, a Westover fire fighter, prepares to enter the base’s new “smoke house,” a training facility designed to simulate the temperatures and visibility fire fighters will face in real world emergencies. Local fire fighters also joined the Westover crew during the June inaugural event here. (photo by Senior Airman Michael Lanza)