

Actively Supporting National Objectives With Ready Mobility Forces



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### EDITORIAL | Looking ahead to another year of challenges



As I write this editorial, another incredibly busy year at Westover is coming to a close for the dedicated men and women of this base. We'll need to emerge from the fun and spirit of the holidays ready to face the challenges of 2007.

The following is a review of what's ahead in the new year:

The Great New England Air Show, set for Aug. 11-12, looms as we draw closer to it each day. This will be our first air show in three years. As usual, we can expect hundreds of thousands of people to visit this base, rain or shine, so planning for this massive two-day public relations event has already begun. The planning and coordination resembles the ORI in 2006 – it is a lot of hard work. This attention to detail will help ensure we have the best air show ever at Westover. I know that our team here will pull together to make this an absolutely unforget-

table occasion for the American public.

Our next challenge is completing the modernization of our C-5 fleet. As of this writing, 11 C-5B models equip the 439<sup>th</sup>. Hats off to our dedicated maintainers, who continue to handle not only fine-tuning the newer airlifters, but as they do so, they are busy shipping the older C-5s to other Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard units. We expect to have 16 B models by early 2008.

After we take a breather following the air show, we have a 22nd Air Force staff assistance visit scheduled for November. The SAV is another in a long list of inspections that the Air Force expects us to incorporate into our schedules. Unlike the ORI and the UCI, however, the focus of the SAV is to help us perform our mission better.

While these major events will keep us busy through this next year, we can expect to see this base grow again as a result of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission's findings. Construction on the Army's new reserve center is scheduled to start by mid-2007. The building will rise near Patriot Avenue and the Marines training center. There will be more

than 800 new faces at Westover. A large portion of this Army population will be full-timers too. Westover will continue to set the bar as a first-class joint service base!

The deck of challenges isn't stacked against us – it awaits us. I know the people of this wing will continue to face each challenge with professionalism and motivation like no other unit I have seen. As your commander for the past 3 ½ years, I know we'll excel as usual! Please stay healthy and safe. I'll see you in 2007.

Wed for

Brig. Gen. Wade Farris 439th Airlift Wing Commander

### **BRIEFS**

### Scholarship available

The Gen. Henry H. Arnold Education Grant applications for the 2007-2008 academic year are available online. The scholarship is for dependent children of military Airmen. The amount has been increased to \$2,000. Scholarship selection is based on need. The web address is at http://www.afas.org.

For more information, call the Airmen and Family Readiness Flight (formally known as the Family Support Center) at Ext. 3024 or 1-866-690-2161.

### Westover snowline

In case of inclement weather, a base snowline has updated recordings available on the status of the base's operating conditions.

The recordings are available by calling 413-557-3444.

### Top 3 members elect seven new leaders

Top three members named Senior Master Sgt. Michael Thorpe as president and Master Sgt. Elaine Perreault as vice president when members of the recently-formed Patriot Wing Top Three Council of senior NCOs elected seven leaders on the December A UTA.

Also elected by the Top Three Council were Master Sgt. Theresa Robert, secretary; Senior Master Sgt. Randy Bates, treasurer; Master Sgt. Jeannette Soucy, first council; Senior Master Sgt. Kris Seney, second council; and Master Sgt. Alice Mitchell, third council.

For more information, call Sergeant Perreault at Ext. 2067.

### Manage awards, decorations online

Air Force reservists can manage their awards and decorations needs online. Reserve airman can submit decoration nomination packages and check and update their own awards and decorations information at http://arpc.afrc.af.mil/vPC-GR.

For more information call the military personnel flight's customer service office at Ext. 3874.

### Combined Federal Campaign tops goal

This year's Combined Federal Campaign topped its goal of \$42,000. The campaign, which began in the Fall, had raised \$42,275 by Dec. 14, according to CFC chairperson Robert Perreault. This was the third year in a row that the campaign had exceeded its goal.

# Sgts. Association membership drive

Members of the local Air Force Sergeants Association (AFSA) chapter are seeking to rebuild their dwindling membership rolls. AFSA promotes itself as the professional organization of choice for Air Force enlisted members.

For more information about the AFSA visit their web site at www. afsahq.org or contact Master Sgt. Marylynn Scherling at Ext. 3163 or marylynn.scherling@westover.af.mil.

### No "butts" about it

By direction of Brig. Gen. Wade Farris, 439th Airlift Wing commander, all military and civilian employees (including civilian contractors) are reminded to dispose of their cigarettes in designated "butt cans" across the base.



**OPEN WIDE** >> A Westover C-5 is opened for a detailed check-up within the isochronal inspection hangar here. Westover was selected as the center for Reserve ISO inspections during an announcement Dec. 13 in which the Air Force unvieled plans to consolidate its ISO facilities.

# Air Force selects Westover as national C-5 inspection, maintenance center

by Senior Airman Michael Lanza

estover will become the new center for in-depth maintenance on all Air Force Reserve C-5 aircraft according to a Dec. 13 announcement by Air Force officials.

The eight existing C-5 isochronal inspection facilities will be consolidated into three in order to increase aircraft availability while cutting support costs, Air Mobility Command officials said.

Isochronal inspections are detailed examinations of the entire aircraft. Aircraft maintainers look for and repair problems in every system, from nose to tail and wingtip to wingtip.

Westover's ISO dock has been here for 16 years. "The average technician in here has about 10 to 16-years of experience," said Senior Master Sgt. Thomas Cessna, a 439th Maintenance Squadron flight chief. "Our experience was a big plus."

Westover's experience combined with its proven facilities will allow the Air Force to streamline the ISO process throughout the Reserves—putting more planes in the air instead of in the hangars.

With no end to the sustained airlift requirements in sight, every C-5 sortie, every pallet moved, is important, said Brig. Gen. Robert McMahon, AMC director of logistics. Each additional C-5 brought "into the fight" means more sorties, and more sorties means better support to the warfighter.

"Westover was selected because we have a proven track record," said Capt. Joseph Zackaricz, a maintenance supervisor at the 439th AMXS. "We have a lot to offer the Air Force, and it's proven by our high success rates and the experience level that we bring."

Despite the massive effort involved in the transition to the C-5B fleet earlier this year— which took many planes off of the flightline, Westover managed to equal the Air Force's mission capable

rates during the last six months, averaging out to approximately 56 percent.

The ISO consolidation will also include more jobs to meet the increased demand for the facilities here. "The plan calls for all Air Force C-5 cargo aircraft inspections to consolidate at three Total Force locations: Westover, Dover AFB, (Md.) and an Air National Guard unit to be announced at a later date," said Brig. Gen. Elizabeth A. Grote, AFRC logistics director, Robins AFB, Ga. "We anticipate being able to realign affected reservists at Wright-Patterson AFB (Oh.) and Lackland AFB (Texas) into vacant positions."

A portion of the active-duty ISO manpower will also be integrated with forces at the Reserve and Guard sites, AMC officials said.

"It'll have a huge impact on the job base here at Westover and in the local community," Sergeant Cessna said. "It's going to solidify our place in the Air Force and in the community."

Westover is home to 16 of the Air Force's 111 C-5s. "It certainly puts us on the map," Captain Zackaricz said. "It guarantees that Westover will be here for a long time."



### Gates takes over at Pentagon

SECDEF to Congress: Iraq, troop welfare are highest priorities

WASHINGTON — Robert M. Gates became the nation's 22<sup>nd</sup> secretary of defense Dec. 18.

Secretary Gates told members of the Congress his highest calling will be to ensure success in Iraq and look out for the men and women in uniform, during his confirmation hearings on Dec. 5.

Secretary Gates told committee members during his opening statement that he's "under no illusion why I am sitting before you today: the war in Iraq." He said he recognizes the importance of improving the situation there.

During a questioning period, Secretary said he doesn't believe the coalition is currently winning in Iraq. But, he added, he also agrees with Joint Chiefs Chairman Marine Gen. Peter Pace's assessment, offered Nov. 29 during a Pentagon news

conference, that the coalition is not term interests in and hopes for the losing, either.

The period ahead is critical in tipping that scale, Secretary Gates said.

"Developments in Iraq over the next year or two will, I believe, shape the entire Middle East and greatly influence global geopolitics for many years to come," he said. "Our course over the next year or two will determine whether the American and Iraqi people and the next president of the United States will face a slowly but steadily improving situation in Iraq and in the region or will face the very real risk of a possible reality of a regional conflagration."

Achieving victory will require cooperation and close coordination by the many players involved. "We need to work together to develop a strategy that does not leave Iraq in chaos, and that protects our longregion," he said.

Secretary Gates said he's open to alternative strategies and tactics for operations in Iraq, including those expected soon from the Iraq Study Group, which he was involved with until President Bush nominated him as defense secretary Nov. 8.

He told the committee he also will consult with military leaders and combatant commanders in the field and "will give most serious consideration to the views of those who lead our men and women in uniform."

Secretary Gates said he will consult with leaders in the executive branch and Congress and share that input with the president and National Security Council. "Of course, it is the president who will decide what, if any, changes are made in our approach," he said.

He told committee members the "most humbling" part of his job... will be making decisions that will have life-and-death consequences.

Secretary Gates offered high praise to the U.S. armed forces and said they proudly carry on the tradition of their predecessors, who have fought the country's wars for the past 230 years.

"The patriots who have volunteered to serve in our armed services today have no equal in the world," he said. "I offer this committee my solemn commitment to keep the welfare of our forces uppermost in my mind."

Secretary Gates, who was previously the president of Texas A&M University, told committee members that his commitment to the troops on the ground is personal. Secretary Gates lost 12 former students who were serving in Iraq.

"I would run in the morning with some of those kids; I would have lunch with them," Secretary Gates said. "They would share with me their aspirations and their hopes, and I would hand them their degree and attend their commissioning. And then I would get word of their deaths. "So this all comes down to being very personal for all of us," he added.

"Every one of them is an individual tragedy for a soldier who has been killed and their family and friends," he said. "And I see this."

Secretary Gates promised to listen closely to people, draw his own conclusions and make his own recommendations. "I did not give up being president of Texas A&M University ... to come back to Washington to be a bump on a log and not to say exactly what I think and to speak candidly, frankly and boldly to people at both ends of Pennsylvania Avenue about what I believe and what I think needs to be done," he said.

Secretary Gates served as director of the Central Intelligence Agency from 1991 to 1993 and has served four presidents. "I am here because I love my country and because the president of the United States believes I can help in a difficult time," he said.

(AFPN)



photo by Airman 1st Class Clay Lancaster

#### < AEROMEDICAL EVACUATION

Aeromedical evacuation crewmembers prepare to take off with 16 patients aboard a C-17 Globemaster III.



### by Senior Master Sgt. Sandi Michon

HE MED-EVAC AIRCREW DUBBED ONE SOLDIER MIRACLE MAN.
The young Marine with praying hands tattooed on his arm was missing the whole left side of his brain, yet was fully functional.
Then, there was Rudy. He encountered an IED that killed his squad leader/friend and 10 days later, Rudy lost the use of his lower extremities when hit by a sniper.

These examples are only two of hundreds of stories etched into the minds of Westover's medical team airlifting wounded warriors stateside while deployed to Andrews Air Force Base, Md. Soldiers wounded overseas transit through Ramstein, Germany into Andrews, Scott AFB, Ill., or Travis AFB, Calif., so they can be airlifted to stateside medical facilities according to the nature of their injuries or their home station.

After two months of medical ministry to the maimed, everyone on the team agrees that the patients have given them the greater gift.

Senior Airman Kristen Pinner, 439<sup>th</sup> Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron med tech who helped care for Miracle Man, said, "The guy was amazing. Not one negative thing came out of his mouth the whole flight. She said their sacrifice has prompted her to look at her life differently.

"I appreciate so much more — and realize I don't really need many of the things I thought I did," said the 21-year-old 439th AES medical technician.

Tech. Sgt. Andrew Merseth, 439th AES med tech and Maj. Brena Jeager, 439th Operations Group flight nurse, flew a two-day mission through Thanksgiving Day. Their last patient was a 21-year-old soldier whose mother was invited on the aircraft to welcome him.



"He didn't see her come on the plane. It was so emotional to watch his expression when he saw her," said Major Jeager. As the mom of an 18-year-old son herself, it's easy to see why the encounter would touch the flight nurse so deeply.

"I look at these patients and think, this could be my baby..." Her sentence trailed off as she choked back tears.

Sergeant Merseth missed out on holiday turkey, but said delivering patients made this Thanksgiving Day 10 times better than any other year. "You can take the holiday for granted. They helped us remember what we are thankful for," he said.

"They totally trust us for every aspect of their lives during the flight – from pain management, to safety – even to go to the bathroom," said Capt. Maria Romanoff. She said that trust leads them to openly talk about how they got hurt... the snipers... what got them on the aircraft.

"You can see the effects of war in their eyes," said the 439th AES flight nurse. "I've heard so many heartbreaking stories from these guys, I want to go the extra mile to care for them," said Senior Airman Ryan Abrams. He likes to go back and talk with the patients when his duties are done. They show him family photos, and pictures of babies they haven't yet seen.

"Their spirit is so great. They are a pleasure to be around," said the 24-yearold 439th AES med tech. "It's humbled me."

Sergeant Merseth tries to connect with the wounded troops through sports, Harleys or branches of service.

"I used to be a 'jarhead,' so I can relate to the Marines," said the husband of an Army nurse. Despite the seriousness of their wounds, Sergeant

Merseth regularly observes, and encourages, their playful rivalry as they compare battle wounds or their favorite sports team's records.

"They make me want to be a better person."

Captain Romanoff was impressed by a young Marine wounded on his second combat tour. Both legs were paralyzed and one arm was partially paralyzed. His dad, dressed head-to-toe in pro-Marine attire, accompanied him home on the C-130. "My life is not over, I can overcome this," said the young Marine who plans to go back to school for a psychology degree so he can help other wounded Marines. Captain Romanoff often sees such defeated attitudes in her civilian nursing job so she marveled at the contrast. "This Marine had the best attitude," she said.

As the Westover team shared their stories, they were impressed by the camaraderie and high morale of the patients despite the hardships.

"The troops are always more concerned about the wounded around them — and they don't even know them," said Airman Pinner. She said they have very positive attitudes and don't care much about the media coverage. "They know what they know. They see it firsthand. They just want to do their job," she said.

Maj. John Crotty is deployed from Westover to head up the Aeromedical Operations Team that coordinates medical airlift out of Andrews. He and fellow 439th AES members, Maj. Elizabeth Ryder, Tech. Sgt. David Kibe and Staff Sgt. Daniel Szafranowicz work long hours to arrange aircraft and equipment to bring patients closer to home. Major Crotty summed up the sentiments of the extended Westover team by quoting a med evac coin adage: "We are not the heroes — we just bring them home."



### Airman buckles under pressure

by Staff Sgt. Tom Ouellette

wo months ago, Senior Airman John P. Bosley made a big mistake. It may have been one of the best things he's ever done.

Airman Bosley was behind the wheel at Westover when he caught the attention - and ire - of security's watchful eyes. They noticed that Airman Bosley, a member of 42<sup>nd</sup> Aerial Port Squadron, wasn't wearing his seatbelt and took prompt action.

They pulled him over, issued a ticket, stripped him of one month's on-base driving privileges and "invited" Airman Bosley to attend a dreaded, disciplinary sit-down visit with Brig. Gen. Wade Farris, 439th Airlift Wing commander.

The experience was so unpleasant that Airman Bosley swore to himself he would never make the same mistake ever again.

As fate would have it, that pledge may have saved his life.

Airman Bosley was driving on Route 291 near Westover the night of Nov. 24 when he lost control of his Honda Civic. His vehicle swerved into a gulley on the side of the road. The Civic rolled

over four times and landed on its roof.

The aerial porter emerged injury-free - thanks to his seatbelt. His girlfriend, Tiffany Girrard, was also in the car but was not so fortunate.

Not wearing her seatbelt, Girrard broke her right elbow, badly bruised her right shoulder and suffered several cuts. Although she managed to recover from the accident, Airman Bosley said she was unable to go to work for awhile.

Statistics prove time and time again that seatbelts help prevent serious injury - and death - in the event a car rolls off a roadway, said David E. LaVallie, wing weapons safety manager, and a former Department of Defense policeman at Westover.

"Ejections of people from cars make up a large percentage of fatalities," Mr. LaVallie said. "Once you're ejected, you're in motion from the force of the car rolling over. There's nothing to stop you from hitting something."

"She got off lucky," Airman Bosley said, "it could have been much worse."

"I now definitely wear my seatbelt all the time," Miss Girrard said.

The accident left General Farris with a huge admirer. Airman Bosley's mother, Marilyn Ranger, called the general the day after the accident to personally thank him for the Patriot Wing's strict seatbelt policy.

"She knew I usually didn't wear my seatbelt before I got into trouble and she wanted to thank the general for getting me to start wearing it every time," Airman Bosley said.

Mrs. Ranger said the wing commander "put the fear of God in him."

"John was lacksadaiscal about putting on this seatbelt before," she said. "I can scream until I am blue in the face. But a general..."

The accident also brought Airman Bosley before all 2,500 members of the wing for a two-minute testimonial during the Dec. 2 Commander's Call in the Base Hangar.

"Maj. (John) Dugan (of the 42<sup>nd</sup> APS) said General Farris asked me to speak," Airman Bosley said, "and although I was nervous, I wanted to do it."

The Airman stood on stage for about three minutes to tell his story.

"I can't stress it enough — please wear your seatbelt," the Airman said at the closing of his talk. I'm very thankful to General Farris."

### **WESTOVER PATRIOTS** |



## Wing honors six with yearly awards

six members of the 439th Airlift Wing earned top honors as the yearly winners in their respective award categories.

### Company Grade Officer of the Year

Capt. Gary Byrd (right)
Operations officer, 439<sup>th</sup> SFS

Most valuable contribution I can make to Westover's mission: "Supporting my troops and ensuring they have everything they need. They're my bread and butter and I cannot perform my job unless they're out there doing everything they can. When they're doing their job successfully, then my unit is doing its job successfully."

### **Senior Noncommissioned Officer**

Master Sgt. Lori Boucher (center)
Wing career assistance advisor, 439th MSS

Most valuable contribution I can make to Westover's mission: "Educating the people about the benefits of the Air Force Reserve and to be there for the people and to listen to their concerns."

#### NCO

Staff Sgt. Erin Cabral 439<sup>th</sup> OSS

### Airman

Staff Sgt. Jason E. Leonard (left) 439<sup>th</sup> ASTS

"I'd like to contribute new and innovative techniques that will make this squadron the best of its kind in the Air Force."

### **Civilian Supervisor**

William Archambeau (center-right)
439<sup>th</sup> MSS

Chief of bioenvironmental engineering

"This award of the reflection of the work we do here. They're the ones who won this award. To me this exemplifies what we do as a team. I appreciate the award but I consider it a team award, a total reflection of the people that work with me. These guys challenge me all the time.

### Civilian

Lisa McCurdy (center-left) 439<sup>th</sup> OSS

composite by Senior Airman Michael Lanzo

### **CES CHANGE OF COMMAND**

The men and women of the 439<sup>th</sup> Civil Engineering Squadron formed in rank and file to witness the change in command when Maj. Paul E. Goliber accepted the unit flag in the squadron building bay on Saturday of the Dec. A UTA.

Col. Dana S. Marsh passed the flag from Col. Paul Babin to Major Goliber during a ceremony in which she ranked the 439<sup>th</sup> CES as "the best civil engineering squadron in the Air Force."

An AFROTC graduate of Clarkson University, Potsdam, N.Y., Major Goliber was commissioned as a second lieutenant in 1989. He served more than four years on active duty as a civil engineering officer at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, followed by another year as a member of the Reserve's former 906th CES.

Major Goliber has served with the 439<sup>th</sup> CES since coming to Westover in 1995. He most recently served as the squadron training officer.



### **PATRIOT PEOPLE** |



NAME: Marilyn A. Dube RANK: Senior master sergeant

AGE: Just a kid

HOMETOWN: Torrington, Conn.

Unit: 439<sup>th</sup> Logistics Readiness Squadron
Position: Vehicle operations superintendent
Civilian Position: Administration specialist

FAVORITE FOOD: Filet mignon

YEARS OF SERVICE: 23

FAVORITE SPORT: Motorcycle racing

FAVORITE HOBBY: Hiking IDEAL VACATION: Sun & Sand

BEST WAY TO RELAX: Going to the beach Preferred entertainment: Reading

FAVORITE HERO: Men & Women of US Armed Forces

FAVORITE MUSIC STYLES: Classic rock

FAVORITE MOVIE: Peter Sellers' Pink Panther Strikes Again

FAVORITE AIRCRAFT: C-130

PET PEEVE: Drivers using cell phones

WHAT WOULD I DO IF I WON \$1 MILLION: There's an island with my name on it.



### **PATRIOT PUNS** |



### **PATRIOT PRAISES** |

Retirements: January-July 2006

Major Elaine M. Chaloux Douglas S. Crow Michael J. Stankus Nora J. Wall James B. White

Captain Robert P. Fotino Donald M. Giorgi Christopher B. Szwed

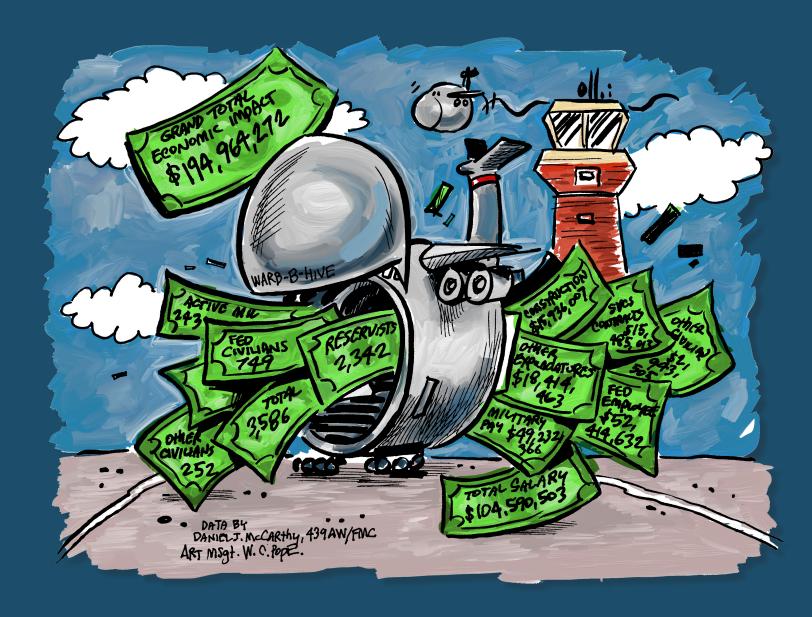
Chief Master sergeant Roger J. Brogis Owen Francis Connolly Jr.
Claude G. Drouin
Arthur F. Flynn Jr.
Frank Lobianco Jr.
Randy J. Malek
Joseph R. Strouse
John J. Tavares
Jeffrey C. Walker

Senior master sergeant Glen D. Gerrans Kenneth J. Gilbert Norman N. Hoskeer Jr. Lex S. Johnson Robert J. Martin Gary W. Watson Elton W Wiehe Jr.

Master sergeant
Anthony Albano
Robert F. Bieniek
Timothy Guy Brock
Ronald J. Buonanducci
Edward A. Cardin
Paul H. Chappelle
Michael J. Denekamp
Thomas A. Faraday
Charles A. Fareira Jr.
Mark C. Hatten
David P. Henry

Robert J. Lowen Peter J. Olbrys John P.Popiak Stephan A.Rossi Francis T. Simone Jeanclaude.Sjogren Ronald A. Stagg Sr. William J. Sullivan Joseph H. Visser Richard E. Wojtowicz

Technical sergeant Robert A. Bathgate Frederick J Chaison III Theodore T. Daniels



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Published monthly for Patriots like Senior Airman Amy L. Ketchin, Mexico Beach, Fla., and 3,586 reservists and civilians of the 439th AW and the wing's geographically separated unit at Hanscom AFB, Mass.

