

PATRIOT

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photo by SrA. Kelly Galloway

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UTA SNAPSHOT

>> Commander's Call, 3:30 p.m., Base Hangar. This is a mandatory formation for all 439th Airlift Wing reservists.

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LRS command change | **pg. 14**

Patriot Praises | **pg. 15**

ON THE COVER: A giant scaffolding system, that towers more than 60 feet into the air, moves toward the new mobile tail enclosure May 22. Turn to page 8 for story and additional photos.



SIGHTS AND SOUNDS >> Security forces Airmen help orient a JROTC student with sighting in a target during the 2013 Youth Outreach. More than 150 area high school students took part in the event held in the Base Hangar May 22. Turn to page 6 for additional photos and story. (photo by MSgt. Andrew Biscoe)

Welcome to the Summer of 2013! Be sure to take time to enjoy it while we continue to adapt to new challenges and accomplish our mission in an excellent manner. Sequestration and furloughs have become a reality and the pace of work does not show any sign of slowing down, but the work ethic and the resilience of the Patriot Wing are evident in everything you do. Thank you for all of your hard work.

The June A UTA was busy. We had a change of command for the LRS on Saturday morning, the Chiefs Promotion Ceremony and the 337th AS Reunion on Saturday night, a big retirement ceremony on Sunday afternoon, and to top it off, a severe thunderstorm on Sunday night. We accomplished all of this while hosting the Chief of the Air Force Reserve and his new Command Chief with style.

The dedication and professionalism of the Patriot Wing was evident everywhere on base during the June A UTA. General Jackson and Chief Kirksey were impressed

by everyone they met and everything they saw. They enjoyed the opportunity to escape from the Beltway and visit with our Citizen Airman and civilians in their workplaces. Our senior leaders realize that the strength of our military does not come from our high tech

it through. Our CUI Virtual Inspections will occur July 16-25, and the actual CUI inspections will take place Aug. 8-13. I'm certain that the inspections will showcase how well the Patriot Wing manages our resources and our attention to detail when documenting our programs. I know there has been frustration during the inspection prep, but the hard work will be worth it when the inspection is over and we are celebrating at Family Day in September.

The 439th Airlift Wing is the best wing in the Air Force. I see it in the shops, on the flightline, on the airplane, in the offices,

everywhere on and off base. This summer promises to be tough, but we are tougher. Take your duties seriously, face challenges head-on, and take some time to enjoy the summer weather when you can.

We will be okay. We are the Leaders in Excellence!

by Col. Steven Vautrain
439th Airlift Wing commander



“This summer promises to be tough, but we are tougher.”

weaponry; it comes from the hard work and dedication of our people. AFRC's top general and chief left Westover with a profound appreciation for the men and women of the Patriot Wing.

Furloughs are set to begin July 8; we are doing everything possible to ease this burden on our valued civilian employees. Times will be tough, but we will make

BRIEFS |

Zombie run

Airmen who enjoy running and want to dress up like zombies are invited to join the Rising Six's first 5K Zombie Run, Oct. 5 (the A UTA Saturday).

To pre-register for the run or to volunteer to assist in the festivities contact, SrA. Heather Wilson at Heather.Wilson.5@us.af.mil. Donations will help offset ticket prices for junior enlisted attending the 2014 Enlisted Ball.

Top 3 hosts volleyball

The Top three is hosting a volleyball tournament to benefit the Westover 75th Anniversary Ball. The volleyball tournament will be held Sept. 7, during the combined UTA for Family Day events. Cost is \$30 per team.

F-15s to join flight line temporarily

F-15C fighters from Barnes Air National Guard Base will temporarily be assigned to Westover beginning in July, while runway repairs are completed at Barnes Municipal Airport in Westfield. About 12 of the jets, assigned to the 104th Fighter Wing, will fly local training missions from here for about six months.

Free museum admission Fridays

The Highland Street Foundation is sponsoring its 5th summer of Free Fun Fridays. Every Friday from June 28 - Aug. 30, museums throughout the state will offer free admission. For a list of museums, visit highlandstreet.org/freefunfridays.html.

Galaxy council plans air/car show

The Galaxy Community Council, a non-profit organization which supports Westover Family Days and air shows, is holding its first air and car show at Westover Metropolitan Airport Aug. 24-25. Dozens of modern and vintage automobiles, and vintage military aircraft, will be part of the air show.

For more information, visit greatnewenglandwingsandwheels.com

Holiday in July

The Holiday in July softball tournament will be held July 13 of the A UTA, 4:30 p.m. A USO-sponsored barbecue will be held at the baseball fields near the base exchange. Afterwards there will be a get-together at the bowling alley and a pie-in-the-face event.

For more information, call SrA. Joseph Roberts at 557-2417.

Free U.S. Park passes

Current military members and family members can get free annual passes to national parks. The annual pass also provides free entry into 2,000 federal recreation sites. Visit nps.gov.

AFRC commander visits Westover

by 1st Lt. Andre Bowser

As the leader of the Air Force Reserve Command toured the Patriot Wing June 4, the three-star general made it a point to shake as many hands as possible, connecting with troops in more ways than perhaps even he knew.

Making his way through a group of Airmen, Lt. Gen. James Jackson shook the hand of one particularly nervous Airman who dropped a ballpoint pen after greeting the general.

Lt. Gen. Jackson could have moved on. He could have made his way to greet others in line, especially given the thunderstorm that was fast approaching Westover and the fact that his aircraft might be grounded before he could return to his headquarters in Georgia. But he stopped.

Kneeling down to retrieve the pen, Lt. Gen. Jackson, in that smallest of gestures, exhibited the second core value that every Airman should carry: Air Force Core Values: 1. Integrity First, 2. Service before self, 3. Excellence in all we do.

Lt. Gen. Jackson said he traveled to Westover because there is no better way to connect with Airmen than to travel to where they are.

"I love my job at the Pentagon, and my staff at my headquarters," he said, but he added that those environments are insulated by several layers from the needs of the everyday Airman. "When I go on the road and meet the units - that's the best way to learn where the problems are."

The main problems he is finding are related to funding availability - or the lack thereof - for many Air Force Reserve initiatives across the country, he said, including military construction lags, as well as funding for aircraft upgrades and training for personnel, among others. However, he said, the solution rests in the Airmen he meets and the endurance they display by doing more with less.

"Every member knows they are a valued member of the team," Lt. Gen. Jackson said, adding that it is up to the members to work efficiently in order to "make the best choices for the Air Force Reserve."



TOUR TALK >> Lt. Gen. James Jackson, commander of Air Force Reserve, meets SrA. Christopher Whelihan, 439th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, during his tour of Westover. Also pictured from left are Lt. Col. Luis Nunez, maintenance group deputy commander, AFRC Command CMSgt. Cameron Kirksey, and Col. Kerry Kohler, 439th MXG commander. (photo by SrA. Kelly Galloway)

Touring several squadrons on base, accompanied by the new AFRC Command CMSgt. Cameron Kirksey, Lt. Gen. Jackson learned about the functions of different shops in keeping our aircraft in the air and the base running smoothly.

In a word, the general said he was "impressed."

His visit came in the middle of a tough fiscal climate, and he said no matter the challenges ahead, putting Airmen first would always be his mandate because without them there wouldn't be an Air Force Reserve to lead.

"It's going to be a difficult time," he said, referring to cuts mandated by Congress that would see Westover with half the aircraft it currently has by 2014, as well as furloughs presently facing many civilians and air reserve technicians. "We can work our way through the turbulence," he assured.

Lt. Gen. Jackson said tours of bases like Westover only affirm what he already knows.

"We have an outstanding group of Airmen here: Great teams, great leaders, great Airmen," he said of Westover. "The problem we're

facing is funding, but we'll make our way just fine."

In parting, just minutes before he boarded the small aircraft destined for Georgia, the storm clouds fast approaching, he offered a unique bit of advice to the Patriot Wing to help ensure that we continue to be "Leaders In Excellence" in the future: "Don't be afraid to look for better ways of doing business... to make the best choices for the Air Force Reserve."



RANGE OF RANK >> Lt. Gen. James Jackson shakes the hand of 1st Lt. Matthew Borowski, 439th Airlift Control Flight, while Col. Michael Miller, 439th Operations Group commander looks on. (photo by SrA. Kelly Galloway)

ART creates furlough survival tips

by MSgt. Andrew Biscoe

"People say I might be nuts for saying this, but I'm embracing the furloughs."

MSgt. Ellen Moore is an air reserve technician assigned to the 42nd Aerial Port Squadron, and a single mom with one son.

"We had enough notice, so I've planned financially," she said. "I live within my means anyway. I hide my money, not forgetting where I put it, of course, but so I won't spend it."

MSgt. Moore has been at Westover for 18 years. She's well-known throughout her squadron and recently took part in getting APS ARTs together to figure out how to deal with the furloughs.

"I've bulked up on food, paper products and cleaning products. My cellar looks like a grocery store," she said. "Clipping coupons takes time, but it saves so much money."

As does breaking other habits that eat up budgets.

"Think about the \$12 or so you spend each week getting that coffee at the drive-through," she said. "You can save so much by cutting down on that alone. You can make your lunch at home before you come to work."

"Shop wisely," MSgt. Moore said. "Follow the flyers. Save your AT money."

She was referring to annual tour money, which MSgt. Moore deposits in a separate bank account.

"I came up with a savings in my budget that amounted to \$3,300 during the year," she said. "I could spend that in a year on scratch tickets."

The Department of Defense is scheduled to begin the furloughs July 8. More than 750 civilians and ARTs at Westover will take 11 days of unpaid leave through the end of September.

New aircraft fuel system landing at Westover

by TSgt. George Cloutier

Gassing up planes at Westover is about to get a big improvement, thanks to a recently awarded \$24.5 million fuel hydrant system funded by the Defense Logistics Agency.

The military construction contract was awarded by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England District. The Corps of Engineers will manage and supervise the project which will be accomplished by Structural Associates, Inc. of East Syracuse, N.Y.

"We've been working with the same fueling infrastructure that has been here since the days of the Strategic Air Command when B-52s were flying out of Westover" said Col. Steven Vautrain, 439th Airlift Wing commander. "A C-5 can hold 323,000 pounds of fuel. This new system is going to greatly increase our ability to deliver that fuel to aircraft as quickly and safely as possible, which is absolutely mission essential."

"This project is going to totally replace the C-5 fuel hydrant system and support infrastructure on the ramp," said Capt. Brett Bailey, 439th Civil Engineering Squadron. He also serves as a civilian

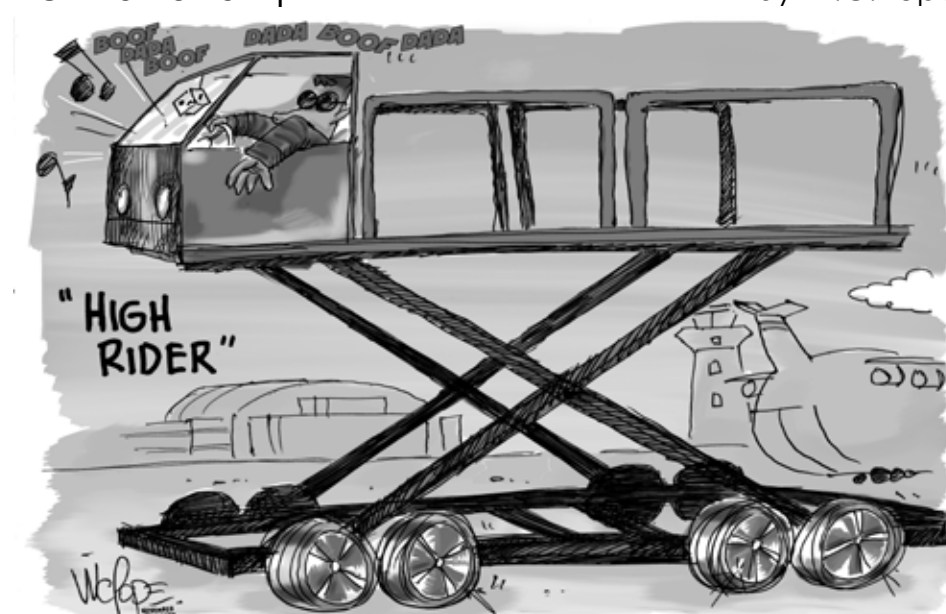
with base civil engineering as chief of design. "The project will construct a pressurized hydrant fuel system with 14 hydrant outlets and two 210,000-pound above-ground fuel storage tanks," he said. "Work will include modifying the existing pumphouse, and constructing new truck fillstands, a hydrant hose truck checkout, product recovery system, and modifying the existing transfer pipeline. Upgrading this system will be a huge benefit to the 439th AW in continuing to meet its mission."

Upgrading the existing fueling infrastructure on the aircraft parking ramp is no small feat and comes with a huge coordination effort between many Westover organizations.

"With the project scheduled to start in September and take about two years to complete, that impacts a lot of operations and requires close coordination with many agencies here on base," Capt. Bailey said. "CE, Corps of Engineers, aircraft maintenance, airfield management, security forces, and fuels are all tirelessly working to ensure the project goes smoothly. We're going to be conducting an elephant ballet out there for two years and we have a world-class team doing it."

POPE'S PUNS |

by W.C.Pope



CHIEFS PROMOTION CEREMONY



NEW CHIEFS CELEBRATED >> (photo to left) MSgt. Anthony Giardini, 439th Security Forces Squadron, lights the candle marking the rank of master sergeant during the Chiefs' Promotion Ceremony held June 1. Also pictured is CMSgt. Christopher Kellam, 439th SFS. (photo above) The four new chief master sergeants are welcomed into the top enlisted rank, from left to right, CMSgts. Andrew McGovern, Michelle Dunfield, Anthony Delduco, and Michael Barna. (photos by W.C. Pope)

Youth Outreach hosts 150 area teenagers

by MSgt. Andrew Biscoe

A major community outreach for Western Massachusetts high school youths held May 22 drew more than 150 area high school students.

Organizers with Westover's Youth Outreach hosted teenagers in the Base Hangar. After a welcoming from Col. Steven Vautrain, 439th Airlift Wing commander, the students divided into teams. They toured a C-5, transport jet, and aircraft maintenance areas.

By hosting this event, Westover's Human Resource Development Council has created a partnership and an ongoing outreach service to the high school youths in the surrounding communities of Chicopee, Holyoke and Springfield.

The League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) convention, held in July 2007, inspired T h e

Hispanic Youth Leadership Symposium. This working group is responsible for facilitating all activities and projects related to community outreach. Organizers renamed it "Youth Outreach" last year. This was the fifth year that the event was held



photos by MSgt. Andrew Biscoe

at the base.

The purpose of Youth Outreach event was two-fold:

- To reach out to area high school youth in the surrounding communities who have the potential to make a difference and become future leaders, whether it is in the Air Force or the community in which they live;
- To share experiences and expertise in what Westover has offered, in the quest to achieve and realize the goals of area youths.



Fourth Cliff: Surprising South Shore Secret

by TSgt. Stephen Winn

After placing our last bag on the dining room floor of our summer rental, my wife and I walked out onto the front porch and were awestruck by the welcoming, light sea breeze and slight overcast sky hanging low to shoreline.

It was a comfortable 70 degrees that day on the shore, and we could not get over the fact that after living in Boston in the South Shore area for about seven years, this was our first time staying at Hanscom Air Force Base's beachfront retreat in Humarock, Mass.

Fourth Cliff Family Area is surrounded by massive homes on stilts and indigenous flowering *Rosa Rugosa* bushes, amid other flora.

Our two-bedroom chalet had an oldish-looking exterior, but the interior had been noticeably updated and maintained to manicured perfection. The kitchenette was fully supplied with everything we could need and even though the front desk will tell you that you will need to supply the little things like coffee, filters, sugar and salt and such, we found that the previous patrons had paid it forward - and left those things behind for us.

So did we, and so should you, if you decide to discover Boston South Shore's secret, too.

If you'd like to go: hanscomservices.com/FourthCliff.asp



LIFE'S A BEACH >> Fourth Cliff Family Recreation Area is located on Boston's South Shore in Humarock, Mass. about a two-hour drive from Westover. The area is part of Hanscom Air Force Base's billeting. Reservations can be booked through their website. (Air Force photo)

Yellow Ribbon Creates Weekend to Remember

by Lt. Col. James Bishop

Sun fell on the palm trees in La Jolla, Calif., as nearly 350 reservists and family members attended a recent Yellow Ribbon event.

Reservists returning from or preparing to go on a deployment, along with their families, can attend regional events and stay at a classy hotel where they hear presenters talk about the benefits they've earned, have an opportunity to visit information tables, and share quality family time.

"We live so far away, it's a great way to let my wife see the military culture and see what support structure is available," said MSgt. Joe Gluckert, who attended a YR event in Orlando, Fla.

Why go? Here are seven reasons.

1. Great locations. Previous YR events

were held in Orlando, San Diego, and other prime locations.

2. It's free. As in no-kidding, free. Uncle Sam flies the service member, spouse, kids, parents, or significant other to the location. The service member gets per diem; family or friends on invitational orders are reimbursed for meals.

3. You get great info. For example, did you know there's a website that offers free, live tutoring for classes for military and dependents? People who attended found out about that, got help with personal finance planning, job info and much more.

4. You enjoy free child care from experienced providers during the seminars.

5. It's an opportunity to get away.

6. You hear nationally recognized motivational speakers. At the La Jolla YR, the featured speaker was Elaine Dumler, author of *The Road Home: Smoothing*

the Transition Back from Deployment.

7. You get to go three times: once within six months before a deployment and twice afterwards.

Anyone deployed away from home for more than 90 days is eligible. "Away from home" could mean you were activated in place at Westover and separated from your family outside the commuting area.

The events are sponsored by the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program, which was established by The National Defense Authorization Act of 2008. The program is part of a DoD-wide effort to help the 1.2 million National Guard and Reserve members and their families connect with the best resources available before, during and after deployments.

Contact Airman and Family Readiness to find out about future events at (413) 557-3024.



by TSgt. Stephen Winn

Westover's newest addition trumps all others of its kind.

Only the roofs of the Dallas Cowboys and Indianapolis Colts rival the size of a new \$4.2 million mobile tail enclosure.

It's technically called a bi-parting empennage enclosure - a giant moving hangar - that wraps around its enormous occupant -- a C-5 Galaxy. It's hard to fathom how these massive monoliths move. There are two massive halves to this engineering marvel weighing about 300,000 pounds. Each is driven independently on steel rails by six synchronized electric drive motors and drive chains. They can move at a speed of 30 feet per minute. The electrical system is independent between the halves so they can both be operated at the same time.

Although it may not be the largest structure on base, it is a one-of-a-kind -- the largest moveable enclosure in the United States military inventory. This is a substantial savings from the projected \$34 million to construct a complete hangar to enclose an entire C-5.





orange on wheels

NASA used a similar crawler-transporters, a pair of tracked vehicles used to transport spacecraft from their hangars to the launch pads from 1981-2011. However these machines are no longer in use.

Demor Engineering President Donald Moore and his crew are responsible for this engineering marvel. Demor has designed 30 other similar structures around the country and is moving on to the flight

-- ENCLOSURE continued on page 13

a continuing series exploring Westover

DID YOU KNOW

EDITORS NOTE: SrA. Kelly Gauoway interviewed Chaplain (Capt.) Matthew Zimmerman to find out more about Westover's full-time chaplain. Chaplain Zimmerman's office is in Bldg. 1100 on Walker Avenue.

Why or what made you decide to or inspired you to join the military?

I've always had a bit of a superhero complex. I have always felt compelled to make a difference... to save the world. That was part of it. However, when you ask this question to a chaplain, the answer better have something to do with God! Seriously, though... for me, I believe the military was and is a part of God's plan for me. As I wrapped up high school, it was very clear to me that West Point was the path for me to take.

How long have you been in?

I joined the Army June 15, 1997 when I took the oath entering West Point. I transitioned from active duty in December 2004 to go to the seminary. I switched from the Army Reserve to the Air Force Reserve in 2008.

Tell me a bit about your experiences at West Point - a memorable moment/life experience?

West Point taught me a lot about me: my values, my priorities, and my resolve. My freshman year was extraordinarily difficult (even by West Point standards). I became THE target of the wrath of all three upper classes for about three months. I nearly failed out during my first semester. However, I eventually overcame and graduated. I learned my breaking point, the strength of my faith, and the true depth of our need to be connected to people around us. As a senior, I was on the command staff and repeatedly spoke and represented the Corps of Cadets to people on the outside. In

short, it grew from near disaster to an experience I am quite proud of. I was on the rowing (crew) team, served as director of the Cadet Radio Station, helped facilitate the annual military skills competition between West Point, Sandhurst (the U.K.'s version of West Point), and countless ROTC teams.

What did you do before you became a chaplain?

I was an Army armor officer. I commanded tanks and scouts.

Have you ever deployed?

I was stationed at Camp Casey, Korea as a tank platoon leader from 2002 to 2003. I was deployed to Iraq during Operation Iraqi Freedom from 2003 to 2004. In Iraq, I served as a scout platoon leader. We were active in the hunt for Saddam, apprehending high value targets, and the collection of weapons. We were involved in missions across Western Iraq in which my guys and I conducted countless raids resulting in the detention and arrest of about 30 known insurgent leaders and the discovery/seizure of two of the largest weapons caches to date.

We were engaged in several direct conflicts and my Bradley Fighting Vehicle struck a land mine during a night patrol. I'm pleased to say that every one of my guys made it home. I received the Bronze Star primarily because I had some incredible people and we took care of each other and the mission.

What made you decide to become a chaplain?

As I hinted above, I live and orient my life by asking God what he would have me do...when I was in Iraq, I believe that he gave me very clear instructions that this is what I am to do. I simply chose to listen and do it.

What do you love most about being a chaplain?



TROOP TALK | What is your favorite summertime vacation destination?



"My ideal summer vacation destination is always somewhere in the Caribbean. I've been thinking about the Bahamas because I haven't been there yet. It would be one of the quieter islands."

>>SrA. Aida Tellado
439th Communication Squadron

"Some place Tropical like an island or Hawaii. I have always wanted to visit Hawaii."

>>Amn. Christopher Sayre
439th Maintenance Squadron



"I love going home to St. Thomas. Anytime I get to leave Connecticut, it's a vacation."

>>SrA. Kia Chapman
42nd Aerial Port Squadron

Remember that superhero thing? I love helping people. Life can be challenging at times. I enjoy being able to offer people hope, joy, perspective, or wisdom.

What is your ultimate goal in the military? Is this going to be a career for you? Did you ever think you'd be where you are now?

I believe that I will stay in the military for as long as they let me. I have enjoyed every assignment. Life is what you make it! I don't know really whether I thought I would be here or not. Expectations are a funny thing... I wanted to be making a difference and always knew I would be somewhere helping

people do that.

Were you ever at crossroads where you needed to make a decision between personal life and military career? How did you decide?

That is an interesting question. The reality for me is that my personal life and the military have always been fairly intermingled. That being said, when those kinds of decisions come up I seek wisdom outside my own and God's guidance. I'm honestly one of those crazy god-people who actually believe He hears us and I have heard Him talk back. The trick for me has always been to get myself to slow down, remove distractions,

and listen. This means prayer and fasting! I pair that with my own common sense and the wisdom of trusted people around me. These steps have never failed to provide me with a good course heading.

What's one thing you wish you had known when you began your military career?

I wish I had truly grasped the amount of effort required to sustain relationships when you are away. I thought I knew that with my head, but I didn't truly understand. When we move around or focus our lives for a time on our training, we have to expend effort to maintain our relationships outside as well.

Health and fitness: a way of life

by Maj. Diane Burch

Fitness. For some, just that word is enough for you to break out in a sweat and cause heart palpitations, but in my opinion that is one of the most important words we know. Fitness builds the foundation for our lives. Some of you may hope that the renewed emphasis on health and fitness is just a passing fad and maybe you can even wait it out. But fitness can mean so much more than the number of push-ups you can do in a minute or how fast you can run a mile and half.

Fitness is a way of life. It's the foundation of what makes us resilient. If you are not physically and mentally prepared to take on the challenges ahead you are already starting at the back of the pack.

OK, OK. I'll admit I enjoy fitness. I love knowing that I am healthy enough to be able to do whatever activity I feel like. Fitness keeps me sane. It's a gift. If it wasn't for the time I put aside every day to dedicate to myself I would not have made it through some of the hardest events in my life.

I didn't just wake up one day and say, "I am going to be fit today." Rather, my fitness has grown with me over the years. It's like an old friend that I can always count on to get me through what lies ahead. During my years in the military I have answered countless questions about health and fitness. I don't have a secret formula. I'll share my top five pieces of advice for living a fit and healthy life.

1. Everyone is a runner. Yes, you read that correctly. You are a runner. You may not be able to go out today and run a marathon, but that doesn't mean you aren't a runner. Millions of people in the United States alone cannot even fathom running a mile and a half, so go ahead and be proud of that. As with anything it is the first step that is the hardest. You're already past that. If you start believing you're a runner, not a jogger or a plodder or whatever else we call our attempts at running, you will become more confident in your abilities.

2. Practice like you play. If we could guarantee that every day we exercise was going to be 60 degrees, partly cloudy, with a tailwind, then that would not be an issue. If your luck is anything like mine then the day of your PT test will be too cold, too hot, too windy, too... don't expect to be able to run in the heat or cold if you've never practiced that before.

3. Fuel your body. This one may seem like a no-brainer, but as they say, "you are what you eat." There is no magical formula or diet that is going to get you there. Your body needs a good mix of carbohydrates, protein, fruits, vegetables, dairy and yes, fat, to live, so ensure you are giving yourself the fuel you need for success. If you don't intend to eat that way for the rest of your life (ie. no carbs, no fats, only soy, no gluten etc.), then don't do it in the first place. You are only setting yourself up for failure. Most importantly, drink water! As the human body is on average 57 percent water, water can rightly be called the liquid of life.

4. Vary your exercises. If you want to run fast and all you do is run, you will be able to run, but you will not be able to run to your fullest potential. All the muscles in our bodies need to be worked, so varying your exercise is key. Over the years I have become a firm believer in cross-training. Strength training, cardiovascular training, and stretching all need to be a part of your fitness routine to reach your fullest potential. So, go ahead and try that yoga class. It won't be as bad as you think.

5. The five Ps. I will never forget sitting in an auditorium on the first day of basic training while someone was barking the five Ps to us; Prior Planning Prevents Poor Performance. Those five Ps have always stuck with me and definitely apply to health and fitness. Plan your workouts, plan your meals, plan your rest days. You need to have a plan, and most importantly, before you get to the gym.

Take this opportunity to reassess. Start with just one small change. Soon you will be on a path to a healthier you.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Maj. Burch is the chief of the 439th AW Military Equal Opportunity office.

THE LAST OF HIS BREED

by TSgt. Timm Huffman

In 1981, Lt. Col. Gary Cooke, longtime 337th Airlift Squadron C-5 pilot, called his local Air Force recruiter and asked what he needed to do to become a C-5 pilot. The next semester, he joined the Reserve Officer Training Corps.

Over the next 32 years, Lt. Col. Cooke dedicated his career to the Air Force's largest airframe and the men and women who support it. He retired June 1, after 28 years of service, 27 of which were spent flying the massive airlifter.

"Nothing beats being up there, flying an airplane," he said.

He's a third-generation pilot; his grandfather trained pilots to fly the famous Burma-India "hump" during World War II and his father instilled in him a love for aviation. Lt. Col. Cooke created his own legacy during his decades in the Air Force. His

procedures and flying for special operators and presidential airlift support.

The work he did testing the C-5's capabilities and developing air-drop procedures led to him being a part of the 1989 Dover Rodeo aircrew that still holds the record for the most weight air-dropped at once: 194,093 pounds. The colonel said the package consisted of four Sheridan tanks and 73 combat troops.

Working with the special operators also afforded him some exciting opportunities, including the distinction of being the co-pilot on the first-ever blacked-out C-5 landing.

"Working with these special operations teams was great because we all knew our job and we knew we had to get it done. You didn't have to tell anyone to do their jobs. We all just did it."

These experiences helped Lt. Col. Cooke develop his philosophy of doing things safely, having a good time and "not worrying about the small stuff."

During the Gulf War in 1991, Lt. Col. Cooke flew supporting missions as part of a crew pool and ended up flying with a crew from Westover. It ended up being a job

interview of sorts and when they all returned from overseas, he said they hired him.

From then on, he flew as a member of the 337th. During his time at Westover, he participated in many unique and demanding missions, including being the third C-5 into Somalia during the conflict there, flying humanitarian airlift missions following



Hurricane Katrina (when passengers were strapped down to the cargo deck for the first time since the Vietnam War) and piloting many missions supporting the war fighters in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Originally from Idaho, Lt. Col. Cooke began integrating himself into the New England landscape. He met his wife, Margaret, while she studied at Mt. Holyoke College, has four kids who have grown up in the local area and is a Red Sox, Patriots and Bruins fan.

On the colonel's last day at Westover, he completed his outprocessing checklist. His care for people was evident because seemed to know everyone. He often stopped mid-sentence, more than once, to check-in or joke around with an Airman or junior officer passing by him.

Standing at just under six-feet-tall, with an unassuming demeanor and a jovial personality, it's no wonder this colonel is so well-known, and loved, around the base. He said that as time has progressed, he has realized that being a pilot means being a leader and that he's worked hard to step up to that job.

That leadership, his love of flying and affinity for the people supporting the mission eventually led him to the work he has done at Westover as the Chief of Safety for many years.

"I have a passion for flying. I want to preserve the heritage of aviation and I hate to see anything happen to the people or the weapons system," he said.

He also deployed as the chief of safety for the 380th Air Expeditionary Wing in



career is lined with firsts, records and assorted amazing stories.

In 1985, he was selected as one of four lieutenants for a new program that put the junior officers directly into a C-5 out of flight school. He was stationed at Dover Air Force Base, Del., and quickly made a name for himself as a co-pilot by doing his job well. This led to some exciting assignments developing C-5 air-drop



Southwest Asia, for six months in 2007. He said that deployment was one of the most memorable times of his career because he learned more about the Air Force then than in the previous 22 years.

More than once, people could be heard describing him as “the last of the last.” What does this mean?

“No one will find anyone like me who has done these things,” he said. “I guess it’s the old-school flying, the raw data stuff, no GPS, flying the one airframe my whole career and my 22 years here at Westover.”

He is the last of his breed. He was the last of those four lieutenants selected to

go to the C-5, has just shy of 8,000 flying hours, has flown missions for every major operation since 1986, has seen and done just about everything with the C-5, including taking a Christmas tree to Somalia, and is the last of a generation of Westover pilots, including former vice wing commanders Col. Michael Marten and the late Col. Patrick Cloutier.

“My best friends in the world come from this base and we do the mission for the shared experiences,” he said as he talked about getting together with old friends at an after-work barbecue scheduled on his last UTA.

“When we get together, we revisit these stories, and they get embellished over time, but it’s about the stories. That’s why we do it,” he said.

Lt. Col. Cooke’s retirement ceremony included Maj. Gen. Wade Farris, 22nd Air Force commander. Maj. Gen. Farris, 439th Airlift Wing commander from August 2003 until June 2008, was the presiding official at the ceremony. The nearly 200 people who attended the ceremony pro-

vided evidence of the quality of Lt. Col. Cooke’s character, the general said.

“He worked for me as a pilot and as a safety officer and he is someone I could depend on to get the job done with integrity and safety,” Maj. Gen. Farris said.

Lt. Col. Cooke’s retirement speech included some of those amazing stories and records - and some



pauses. He sought to regain his emotions as he prepared to close a chapter of his life as an Air Force officer.

“My whole career at Westover has been good and I’ll always be a member of the 337th,” he said, clutching the microphone and looking out over the audience. “I love the airplane, but it’s nothing without the people.”

-- ENCLOSURE continued from page 8

line at Lackland Air Force Base, (part of Joint Base San Antonio) Texas, soon, to build the next one.

Not only can this enclosure hold the movable tail stand, it has its own heating, lighting and fire suppression system. The compact fluorescent lights in the new structure provide much needed increased lighting for the maintainers.

“I think it’s brighter than the existing hangar,” Moore said.

Westover is one of only two bases performing isochronal maintenance for all active duty, reserve, and Air National Guard C-5s. Maintenance workers perform this specialized work in a former B-36 hangar which could not accommodate the 65-foot high C-5 tail. Over the years, New England’s renowned ferocious winters, which includes wind, snow, and sub-zero temperatures, impacting maintenance schedules.

The new structure adds 12,550 square feet of climate controlled workspace to the regional isochronal hangar. Four

people are required to safely open or close each half. Once the doors are either fully opened or closed there are 10 massive hand operated locks that engage with receptacles in the concrete.

This new structure is 80 feet 5 inches tall at its peak, which is 13 feet taller than the existing hangar it joins. Production of the hangar took a crew of seven, plus three separate cranes. Terry Nichols, one of the builders on the project, spoke on the coordination and effort required to assemble this behemoth.

“Picking up big iron like that, you have got to be safe. Positioning a 16,000-pound beam can be tricky,” he said.

As busy as the RISO has been over the last few years, competing for enclosed work space has necessitated the addition of the mobile tail enclosure. This is intended to be a temporary fix to a long-term issue in that Westover only has one hangar that can enclose the entire C-5. Plans still call for construction of a new maintenance complex which will be large enough to hold a C-5’s 247-foot-long fuselage, nose to tail and all.



SFS-X

RUNNING BASE SECURITY >> Members of the 439th Security Forces Squadron hold a stretcher during the annual Squad challenge held on the June UTA. Security forces defenders competed in events that tested leadership, teamwork, physical ability, and deployed/home station job knowledge. (photo by TSgt. Brian Boynton)

New LRS commander



LRS CHANGES COMMAND >> Lt. Col. Michael Pirrone addresses the Airmen of the 439th Logistics Readiness Squadron June 1 in the Base Hangar. Lt. Col. Pirrone assumed command of LRS from Col. Michael Buoniconti June 1. Lt. Col. Pirrone, a 1993 Air Force Academy graduate, has served in the Air Force for 20 years and is a veteran of five deployments, including a six-month deployment in Afghanistan in 2012. (photo by TSgt. Brian Boynton)



Westover enlisted workshop

ENLISTED WORKSHOP >> One hundred-ten Patriot Wing enlisted members gathered in the Westover Conference Center June 3-4. Airmen learned more about their careers through team-building, public speaking tips, and mentoring. (photos by TSgt. Brian Boynton)



FACES OF WESTOVER

PROMOTIONS

Senior Master Sergeant

David Berkebile

**Master Sergeant**

Paul Baptist III

Cecil Calvin

Ryan Connolly

Shawn Dominik

Shannon Gratton

Sammy Kirkland

Jamie Serrano

Gary Surozenski

**Technical Sgt.**

Scott Gomes

Randy Hall

Gregory Harper

Janai Lee

Joseph Mahoney

Philip McCarthy

Adam Platt

Brooke Rose

Michael Valentin

Eric Wilcox

**Staff Sergeant**

Richard Acevedo

Jeffrey Bagge

Robert Bergendahl III

Stephanie Cataldo

Margaret Gabriel

Jason Mainville

David McMaugh

Teneisha Ragin

Thomas Rowland III

Walter Selkirk

Nathan Tetreault

**Senior Airman**

Erik St. Germain

Donna Leonard

Cody Lewis

Daniel King

Ian Williams

**Airman First Class**

Jordan Duffy

Ronald Geronimo

Matthew Fairbanks

Cody Luukasik

Dale Nasuta

Michael Natale

Andrew Norris

Willie Pearson

Jonathan Zelisko

**Airman**

Elias Martins



Sgt. Justin Clark

Sgt. Justin Clark

Marine Air Support Squadron 6

One day before the tragic events of Sept. 11, 2001, then-20-year-old Justin Clark, of Chicopee, Mass., officially swore into the United States Marine Corps.

The following day, he was at a friend's house when he witnessed the events on live television. "I remember being very angry," he said. He left the house in complete shock. "That morning was beautiful; not a cloud in sight... sunny, warm, no breeze and two kids playing in the front yard oblivious to what had happened," he stated. It was then he realized our lives as Americans had been changed forever.

After a lateral move from his prior career field as a machine gunner in 2008, Sgt. Clark currently serves as a small arms repairman, commonly referred to as an armorer. His responsibilities are to inspect, maintain and conduct maintenance on all weapons and optics within the squadron armory.

-- SrA. Kelly Galloway

RETIREMENTS |

Master Sergeant

Jon Templeman

Steven Wetmore

Technical sergeant

Jeffrey Surprenant

Steve Traugh

SERVICES CALENDER |

Submitted by Mollie Anello, services marketing assistant

CLUB >> The Grind is now open! Featuring protein shakes, salads, wraps, sandwiches, coffee and much more! Located in the lobby of the Fitness Center, open from 6 a.m. - 5 p.m., Monday through Friday and on UTAs.

BOWLING >> The Bowling Center is finally re-opening so join the "Have-a-Ball League" today! Upon completion of the League All Bowlers will receive a ball, bag and bowling towel. Bowlers will also enjoy extra entries into the Summer program: "Beat the Heat"!

FITNESS CENTER >> Sign up today for the "Gate-to-Gate Fun Run"! Starting at 8 a.m., July 18. Can you go the distance?

OUTDOOR RECREATION >> Summer weather is upon us! Stop by outdoor rec for campers, kayaks, canoes, boats and more to enjoy the outdoors!



Published monthly for Patriots like SSgt. Kellie Miller, of Monson, Mass., and more than 5,500 people assigned to Westover Air Reserve Base.

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TOUCHDOWN >> A Patriot Wing aircrew settles some 400,000 pounds of C-5 onto the runway at Westover June 4. Airmen with the 337th Airlift Squadron fly local training missions over western Massachusetts, and take to the skies over northern New England for bi-weekly air refueling missions. (photo by Thomas Overlock, stringer photographer)