



PATRIOT

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photos by W.C. Pope

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439TH AIRLIFT WING COMMANDER
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UTA SNAPSHOT

>> Saturday: Pin-on ceremony for Brig. Gen. Steven Vautrain, 3:30 p.m., Base Hangar

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ON THE COVER >> Joint-service spirit highlighted a January airlift mission in which a Patriot Wing C-5 airlifted several Army National Guard helicopters. Senior guard leadership visited Westover to personally thank Brig. Gen. Steven Vautrain, 439th Airlift Wing commander.

EDITORIAL | Perspective from 38,000 feet

I wrote this article aboard a C-5 on the way back from the AOR on my first downrange mission as a brigadier general. While cruising at 38,000 feet over Eastern Europe I had the opportunity to reflect on some thoughts I had while watching the offload and onload of our aircraft.

It was the middle of the night, but the airfield was busy, and loud. Fighter aircraft were taking off on attack missions, troop helicopters were loading ground troops for night operations, attack helicopters were circling the base to provide protection, and cargo onload/offload operations were occurring in several places across the ramp. Those cargo operations are essential to keep all of the other pieces of this machine in motion.

During times like this I think of the aircrews who fly our C-5's, the maintainers who keep these monstrous aircraft in the air, the aerial porters who load them, the security forces who protect them, the finance people who keep the pay flowing, and all the myriad other people who ensure that our primary mission of providing Global Reach for America does not fail. Whether it is providing valuable supplies to our troops in the field or delivering lifesaving supplies to suffering people anywhere in the world, the Patriot Wing does it better than anyone else.

None of these duties are easy. Missions are changed at the last minute, airplanes break, cargo is mislabeled, vouchers aren't paid, and Murphy's Law is always present. It is a sign of professionalism that our people tackle these problems and press on. There will definitely

be griping (it's a military tradition), but we pull together to make sure the warfighter is supported and the relief supplies get through.

Sometimes it's easy to lose sight of the ultimate goal of our mission. Answering the alert call after two hours of sleep, trying to replace a leaking windshield on a cold rainy night, pushing 10,000-pound pallets when your back aches, listening to a driver complain about the speed limit while you stand in the freezing cold writing a ticket, or fielding your tenth phone call of the day complaining about DTS, it's easy to become frustrated and wonder why you come back to work every day. When that happens, think of Marines fighting for survival to defend a FOB and their platoon, or the mother of a child shivering in the remains of her home after a tornado, and you may gain a better perspective. We all face hardships. How you deal with them is a reflection on your character.

What makes the Patriot Wing great is not the numerous awards that we have won. They are an indication of the wing's excellence. But it's the people who make the Patriot Wing great. We pull together to accomplish the mission. Hard times build camaraderie and camaraderie builds lifelong friendships. Keep things in perspective. It's hard to believe now, but years later you'll probably sit back over a beer and laugh about what seemed like an insurmountable problem at the time. The problem will be gone, but your friends will still be there. Look out for each other, make the best of bad times, and remember that your job is important, no matter how you might feel at the moment.

Thank you for your service. Thank you for your support. Thank you for all you do.

by Brig. Gen. Steven Vautrain
439th Airlift Wing commander



BRIEFS |

"General" courtesy

Whenever seeing Brig. Gen. Steven Vautrain, 439th Airlift Wing commander, in his vehicle, Airmen not in formation but in uniform are required to salute. When the salute is rendered, hold the salute until it is returned by the commander, or after the vehicle has passed.

Base Ellipse closed

The Base Ellipse is closed for vehicle traffic through the winter to preserve the recently renovated running track from potential snow removal damage. No reopening date has been set yet.

Mission support group sweeps awards

The 439th Mission Support Group Base Civil Engineers nearly swept the Reserve command unit and flight awards this year. These civilians and reservists took five out of six group awards. The Harry P. Reitman Award for the outstanding civil engineer individual award went to Wayne Williams. MSG also won the Balchen/Post Outside agency award.

MWR facilities depend on solid usage

Air Force officials remind Airmen and their families to use the base morale, wellness and recreation facilities, which include the newly-renovated Westover Club, bowling alley, and fitness center.

Services officials said that each only receives minimal financial support from the reserve command, and constant Pentagon budget constraints are forcing more scrutiny with how much these facilities are used.

Visit westoverservices.com for more information.

Star pin-on

The 439th Airlift Wing will formally recognize its wing commander with his new rank Feb. 8. A pin-on ceremony for Brig. Gen. Steven Vautrain will take place at 3:30 p.m. in the Base Hangar.

Maj. Gen. Richard Haddad, vice commander of the Air Force Reserve, will be the presiding officer.

Facebook page

The base Facebook page, with more than 7,100 "likes," features news, photos, and links to Westover and Air Force news.

Visit the page at Facebook.com/Westover.Patriot

HERCULES TRIES TO MUSCLE GALAXIES >>

Westover snow plow and de-icing crews faced winter storm Hercules head-on Jan. 2-3 as seven inches of snow piled up on the base and flight line. Evening temperatures Jan. 3 dropped to -13 degrees below zero and on Jan. 4 temps got down to -17, a record low for that date, according to base weather forecasters. (photos by SSgt. Kelly Goonan)



Westover command chief selected for 22nd AF



photo by W.C. Pope

The Patriot Wing’s senior enlisted Airman will soon take the same job - one level higher in the Air Force Reserve chain of command.

CMSgt. Michael Thorpe will become the 22nd Air Force Command Chief Feb. 1, replacing CMSgt. Steven Larwood.

Maj. Gen. Mark Kyle, 22nd AF commander, selected CMSgt. Thorpe for this position. The numbered Air Force headquarters is located at Dobbins Air Reserve Base, Ga.

“As my tenure comes to a close and I move on to 22nd to take on a new role, know that the Patriot Wing will also have a special place in my heart,” CMSgt. Thorpe said. “The life lessons I have learned over the past 25 years will serve me well. The most important decision I have ever made in my life was to enlist in the Patriot Wing. The missions may change but there is one constant - your loyalty and dedication. It has truly been an honor.”

Twenty-Second AF has command supervision of the Reserve’s air mobility operations and other vital mission sets to include

undergraduate pilot training, flight test operations and a highly mobile civil engineering response force. It includes more than 15,000 reservists and 105 unit equipped-aircraft.

CMSgt. Thorpe has been the command chief with the 439th Airlift Wing at Westover since May 2011. He joined the Air Force Reserve in 1988.

PORTEN NAMED NEW HONORARY COMMANDER

by TSgt. Stephen Winn

A retired president of a major local hospital assumed honorary command of the 439th Airlift Wing during the January A UTA.

Hank Porten, who lives in Holyoke, is taking over from last year’s honorary commander, Bud Shuback, president of the Galaxy Community Council.

After nearly 28 years as president and chief executive officer of Holyoke Medical Center and its affiliates, Porten stepped down last summer.

Mr. Porten’s educational background includes a bachelor’s degree in economics from the University of Illinois, a master’s of business administration in finance and management from DePaul University and a post-master’s degree in health-care administration from George Washington University.

As President and CEO of the Holyoke Medical Center and Valley Health System Mr. Porten

worked hand-in-hand with reservists from Westover participating in periodic disaster drills.

As a corporate sponsor of the Galaxy Community Council for nearly 30 years, Mr. Porten has helped



photo by TSgt. Brian Boynton

produce many successful air shows at Westover.

“There’s a soft spot in my heart for those serving in the armed forces,” he said. “The sacrifices and things they do are special, and I’m always willing to do anything I can to assist.”

Mr. Porten served eight years in the Army - split between active duty and the reserve time. He was a captain for the in the infantry. He has two other children, one of whom serves at March Air Reserve Base in southern California. The Airman traveled from California

to see his father’s honor first-hand.

Mr. Porten doesn’t take lightly providing a service to the men and women of the Patriot Wing. “It’s an honor. I feel humbled that I get to work with the military,” he said. “To serve again is the biggest reward I can get.”

Active-duty Air Force to bear brunt of cutbacks

WASHINGTON (AFNS) -- Air Force leaders announced force management programs last December designed to reduce the force by thousands of Airmen over the next five years as a result of sequestration.

While the service may be forced cut about 25,000 Airmen, cuts to the reserve are slated to be far less – about 900 Airmen.

For the latest on budget and personnel cuts, visit the Air Force Reserve Command’s Straight Talk on line information site: afrc.af.mil/library/str8talk/index.asp.

Fiscal 2014 force management initiatives are in addition to the announcement made last July stating the Air Force will implement several force management programs to meet budget reduction requirements.

Air Force leaders made the decision to announce the overall strategic plan now so that Airmen have the necessary time to consider all their career options.

Westover reservists should also visit the Westover web and Facebook pages for the latest budget news. The web site link is westover.afrc.af.mil and Facebook is facebook.com/westover.patriot.

(439th AW Public Affairs and Air Force Public Affairs Operating Location-Pentagon)

Ironman Tri-athlete Kicks Off Westover Strong Campaign

by TSgt. George Cloutier

A local Ironman competitor and mother of three children told reservists on the January A UTA about her successful style of athleticism and time management.

Michelle Fitzell is a physical therapist at Bay State Hospital in Springfield. This past August, she completed her first Ironman competition in Louisville, Ky.

The Ironman is a 2.4 mile swim, a 112-mile bike ride and 26.2-mile run -- all done in succession.

SMSgt. Shane Robitaille, 439th Force Support Squadron Superintendent and Westover Human Resources Development Council member, invited Fitzell to speak to Westover Airmen about her experience as part of the HRDC’s Westover Strong campaign. The campaign is a series of quarterly learning opportunities intended to inform, enlighten and inspire Airmen to develop and grow in their Air Force careers.

“What inspired me to select Michelle as our first presenter is that from all appearances, she’s like everyone else, busy with her career and her kids. But somehow she manages to do pretty amazing things,” SMSgt. Robitaille said.

Fitzell lives in South Hadley with her boyfriend and children. She said she feels like a very average person, even though she completed one of the most difficult sporting events in the world.

Now, she wants to inspire and educate other normal, busy people on how to achieve their fitness goals, as modest or as lofty as they may be.

“What I’m trying to encourage is for people to find time in their schedules to exercise regularly because it is something that’s important for longevity, health and wellness,” Fitzell said. “We all have an inner athlete. You don’t have to be competing to do something physical. Our bodies are the



most price-

less thing we have. We can’t destroy them and try to pick up the pieces later on.”

Fitzell started her path to the Ironman eight years ago when she had a stroke. She underwent open heart surgery to patch a small hole in her heart that allowed a blood clot to pass to her brain. After getting the OK from her doctor to start exercising again, she went at it with a renewed conviction.

Prior to her Ironman, Fitzell participated in many smaller tri-athlete events around the state. In October of 2012, while participating in a walk to benefit tuberous sclerosis, a chronic condition her niece suffers from, she decided to sign up for the Ironman.

To prepare for the Ironman, Fitzell began training six hours weekly and eventually worked her way up to 18 hours per week over the course of a 30-week training program, starting in January 2013. The hardest part of the training, Fitzell said, was finding the time to train between her job and family life. Not wanting to abandon her family, she overcame that problem with creative solutions that combined fitness and family time.

“I would go for long runs with my son riding his bike for 8,9,10 miles,” Fitzell said. “One time I ran around a track for an entire junior varsity football game while my son played. My youngest plays youth lacrosse and I would send him to games with his grandparents and ride my bike there.”

Fitzell said finding time is often the biggest

Patriot Wing Airmen attend the Westover Strong event at the Westover Club Jan. 12. (photo by TSgt. George Cloutier)

challenge for aspiring athletes and those looking to improve their fitness. She offered three tips to help find time.

“I think the number one is early morning workouts, because if you plan to work out later in the day something might change or come up,” Fitzell said. “It’s not a fun time to exercise and it’s not an easy thing to do, but it’s much less likely for something to happen at five in the morning. You may go to bed earlier because you know you’re getting up, but I don’t think you’re going to miss much during those hours.

“My second tip is that TV is not that important,” Fitzell said. “I don’t watch a lot of television. If there’s something I really want to see, I’ll record it and watch it later sitting on my stationary bike.

“Third, finding ways to incorporate your family into your exercise is important too,” Fitzell said. “Go sledding with your kids and run up a hill and tell me that’s not exercise. You can do a lot of things that are physically active without having to leave everyone and spend an hour at the gym. There are lots of ways to incorporate your family into your activities. That way it becomes more of a family event than your event.”

EDITOR’S NOTE: The next edition of Westover Strong is scheduled for noon Feb. 8 (Saturday of the A UTA) and is entitled Nutrition Matters: Eating Healthy in a Fast-Paced World.



439th Airlift Wing

February 2014

**439th Airlift Wing
Commander**
Brig. Gen. Steven Vautrain



Vice Wing Commander
Col. Jeffrey Hancock



Command Chief
CCMSgt. Michael Thorpe



Westover Air Reserve Base
The Patriot Wing
“Leaders in Excellence”

439th Maintenance Group
Col. Kerry Kohler



439th Operations Group
Col. Michael Miller



439th Mission Support Group
Col. Kenneth Lute



439th Aeromedical Staging Squadron
Lt. Col. Karen Gardner
MSgt. Kimberly Kopp



439th Aerospace Medicine Squadron
Col. Stanley Chartoff
MSgt. Matthew Mynczywor



439th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron
Col. Adele Hill
Vacant



439th Operations Support Squadron
Lt. Col. Stephen Taylor
MSgt. Alexander Reno



337th Airlift Squadron
Lt. Col. Michael Smith
MSgt. Albert Raymond



439th Airlift Control Flight
Lt. Col. John McSpadden
MSgt. Mark Seitz



439th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron
Lt. Col. Michael Travalent
CMSgt. Michelle Dunfield



439th Maintenance Squadron
Lt. Col. Kristofer Terry
CMSgt. Timothy MaGuire



439th Civil Engineering Squadron
Maj. Robert Russo
SMSgt. Stacy Gilman



439th Security Forces Squadron
Lt. Col. Wesley Thiel
SMSgt. Frederick Hetu



42nd Aerial Port Squadron
Lt. Col. Qais Ajalat
SMSgt. Dawn Rivet



58th Aerial Port Squadron
Lt. Col. John Dugan
MSgt. Eric Harris



439th Communications Squadron
Lt. Col. Xavian Draper
MSgt. Chelsey Martin



439th Logistics Readiness Squadron
Lt. Col. Michael Pirrone
MSgt. Kimberly Babin



439th Force Support Squadron
Lt. Col. Patrick Dufraine
MSgt. Daniel Howard



Honor Guard

by SrA. Alexander Brown

"On behalf of the president of the United States, the United States Air Force, and a grateful nation, please accept this flag as a symbol of our appreciation for your loved one's honorable and faithful service."

That was the powerful message from TSgt. Matthew Swindlehurst, as he addressed the family of a deceased Army Air Corps member during a recent funeral service.

The Westover Honor Guard consists of 20 members who volunteer their time to be part of this prestigious group. They cover 90,000 square miles and average more than 500 funerals annually.

The honor guard forms part of a large network of teams who are responsible for their respective bases. The U.S. Air Force Honor Guard team, based in the nation's capital, is often seen at much larger public events, ceremonies and funerals.

The Air Force Honor Guard originated in 1948 when Headquarters Command directed the creation of an elite ceremonial unit that was activated and charged with maintaining an Air Force ceremonial capability in the National Capital Region. The Honor Guard officially became a separate squadron in 1972.

Both nationally and locally, what makes these Airmen exceptional is that they are still required to complete all of their duties for their primary jobs. They also have to complete at least two weeks of in-house training until they're approved to perform at ceremonies.

This might seem like a lot of work for something that appears

as simple as folding flags and marching, but the responsibilities go above and beyond those military spectacles.

"I joined (the Honor Guard) after my grandfather passed away," said TSgt. Swindlehurst. "When I attended his funeral I was horrified to see his funeral services mishandled. They had to refold his flag multiple times. When I witnessed that, I knew I never wanted anyone else to experience that."

While watching TSgt. Swindlehurst, TSgt. Kris Grimshaw and TSgt. Anthony Racco prepare for a funeral. There's a sense of pride, dedication and attention to detail. They tailor their step and movements to each grave site, mapping out each step to adapt to obstacles such as steep hills, flowers or other graves.

However, even with all the preparation, nothing can prepare them for unexpected adjustments during a ceremony, like when flowers are placed on the wrong side of the casket.

"Sometimes things happen that force us to change how we perform," said TSgt. Grimshaw. "That's when your training kicks in. You make eye contact with the other member and just know that you both have to be thinking the same thing because there is no stopping, no talking, and you can't break military bearing."

There are also emotional challenges that go with the job.

"The hardest part is maintaining your military bearing when presenting the flag to family -- especially when it's a kid," admitted TSgt. Swindlehurst. "You can see the kid is trying to be tough for us, and no matter what, we still have to maintain military bearing. The idea that keeps me going is knowing that I have the honor of being their last send-off."

EDITOR'S NOTE: People with questions about joining the Westover Honor Guard may call 413-557-3342.

TROOP TALK | Who has been the biggest influence on your military career??



"I've always looked up to my big brother, so I have to say him. He's also in the Air Force and is an officer on active duty."

>> **TSgt. Shannon Oleksak**
439th Airlift Wing
command post

"I'd have to say my grandfather because of his love for the Air Force from the time that he served. He encouraged me to enlist."

>> **Amn. Jordan Vert**
42nd Aerial Port
Squadron



"SMSgt. (Karen) Scott because she took me under wing, believed in me and has been an amazing mentor -- guiding me in the right direction since day one."

>> **TSgt. Sean Robbins**
337th Airlift Squadron



photos by SSgt. Kelly Goonan

Retired APS chief: POW in Iranian Revolution

by MSgt. Timm Huffman

Guests at CMSgt. Henry Lojkuc's (pronounced "Lo-check") recent retirement ceremony would never guess the unassuming and deferential aerial porter was ever a player in world affairs. But for one month in 1979, he was a prisoner of war in Tehran during the Iranian Revolution.

It's Valentine's Day, 1979, and he's a Marine Corps corporal, newly arrived at his first embassy duty assignment. A mob of angry Iranians has formed in the streets and automatic weapons fire is pelting the walls of the compound.

Enlisting while still in high school, the chief's life dream was to join the military. He proceeded through boot camp at Parris Island, S.C., went to advanced infantry school and then volunteered for reconnaissance school in order to earn his jump wings. After graduating from Airborne School, he was assigned to help patrol the Mediterranean Sea, which is when he volunteered for embassy duty.

After meeting all of the requirements and graduating from school, he was assigned to embassy duty in Bucharest, Romania. A last-minute vacancy at the embassy in Tehran shook things up, though.

"There was a board in the detachment with all our names on it and the location code for who was going where," Chief Lojkuc explained. "I came in one morning and BCH was changed to THR and I knew something was up."

The position in Tehran required someone with a background in reconnaissance. At the time, then-Cpl. Lojkuc didn't think anything of the change, and hopped on the plane to Iran. After stops at John F. Kennedy Airport in New York and then in London, his flight overnights in Pakistan while they waited for daylight and the permission needed to land at the airport in Iran.

"They parked tanks and stuff on the runway at night to keep planes from landing," he said.

As his transport left the airport for the embassy, the chief said he could tell it was going to be rough because of the many road blocks and tires on fire they encountered on the way. The Marines he met at the embassy described recent times when they were allowed leave to go into the city and surrounding countryside. Unfortunately for Cpl. Lojkuc, the political situation in the country required all embassy workers to be restricted to the compound.

As things in Tehran heated up, the environment inside the complex became tense. The Iranian army left their posts defending the perimeter, due to political issues, and defense of the embassy and its 500 civilians was left to Cpl. Lojkuc and 18 other Marines. They were put on 24-hour alert and rotated on and off duty.

At 9:30 a.m. on February 14, a mob formed in the street outside of the embassy. Sniper and automatic weapons fire began entering the compound and rioters began scaling the walls.

With instructions from the ambassador not to fire back unless directly attacked, the Marines hunkered down where they could with their civilian wards. Cpl. Lojkuc found himself near the rear of the complex in a restaurant-type building with two other Marines and about 30 embassy employees.

As they defended their position, the call came from the ambassador for the Marines to surrender if possible. After hiding their

weapons, shotguns and .38s, in the freezer, Corporal Lojkuc and his fellow Marines surrendered.

"We were taken out behind a berm and stripped down to our t-shirts, trousers and boots and made to kneel with our hands in the air," he remembered. "We thought they were going to execute us."

The Fedayeen Kalq guerrillas, who were behind the takeover and desperate for automatic weapons, were demanding they tell them where they hid their weapons. To buy time, Sgt. Kenneth Kraus volunteered to show where they had stashed the weapons. When they realized there were no automatic rifles, one of the guerrillas struck Sgt. Kraus with a rifle and then discharged a shotgun round into his head, nearly killing him.

"We saw them carrying Sgt. Kraus out with blood coming from his head," Chief Lojkuc said.

It wasn't until later, when Sgt. Kraus was released from the Iranian prison a month later that the chief learned what had happened.

After Sgt. Kraus was shot, the Marines were corralled into the ambassador's complex. It was during this time that Cpl. Lojkuc managed a singularly distinctive act of patriotism. He managed to slip away from his captors and enter the main embassy building. Because of the large amount of tear gas, he had to hold his breath while he went in and got a gas mask. After donning his protective mask, he went to where the U.S. and Marine flags were stored and he hid them on his person. He slipped quietly back into captivity.

He said he couldn't bear the thought of the colors under his watch being desecrated the way he had seen happen recently in the streets outside the embassy.

For the next month, Cpl. Lojkuc, his fellow Marines and the 500 other embassy residents were held as prisoners of war and were essentially on house arrest. Negotiations were made for non-essential American personnel to leave the country. To decrease tensions, the Marine embassy guard was also changed and on March 21, 1979, Cpl. Lojkuc boarded his flight to freedom.

That November, members of the U.S. embassy in Iran would be taken into captivity for 444 days.

After his ordeal, Cpl. Lojkuc returned to embassy duty, this time in Vienna, Austria, where he met his wife. He left the Marines in 1982, after spending a year as an instructor in the reserve component, to focus on his civilian career in law enforcement.

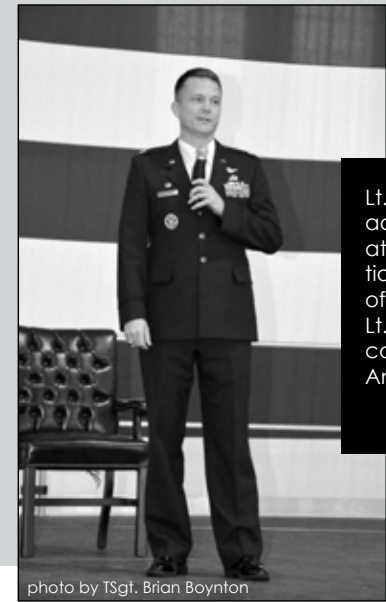
In the mid-90s, after a friend suggested he check out the Air Force, the Marine started talking to a Westover recruiter. Attracted by the one-weekend-a-month, 15-days-in-the-summer deal, he signed up as a staff sergeant with the 58th Aerial Port Squadron in 1997.

Over the years he progressed from ramp operations and eventually become the 58th APS operations chief.

SMSgt. Craig Savoie, who started at Westover alongside Chief Lojkuc after they both had long breaks in service (SMSgt. Savoie is prior Navy). He said CMSgt. Lojkuc's retirement marks the loss of someone who always brings 100 percent dedication to the table.

"He brought a gung-ho, can-do attitude with him from his Marine days," said SMSgt. Savoie, a close friend of CMSgt. Lojkuc. "Nothing was too big to go over, go around or blow up to get it out of the way."

-- continued on page 10



Communication Squadron change of command

Lt. Col. Xavian Draper addresses the audience at the 439th Communications Squadron change of command Jan. 11. Lt. Col. Draper assumed command from Col. Anthony Perkins.

photo by TSgt. Brian Boynton

Annual Awards

SNCO (fourth quarter): MSgt. Danita Thibeault
NCO: TSgt. Francis Sforza
SNCO: MSgt. Charles Carlin
Company Grade Officer: Capt. Bruce Lawler
First sergeant: SMSgt. Frederick Hetu
Airman: SrA. Amanda Collins

Renovated Westover Club reopens

The Westover Club, closed for nearly 18 months for in-depth renovations, reopened on the January A UTA. Hundreds of reservists filed into the club for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Reservists gathered in the club the evening of Jan. 11 for its grand reopening which featured a live band in the barroom. This was the first major renovation at the club, originally built in 1973. For more information on the “new” club’s hours, call 413-557-2039 or visit westoverservices.com Coverage the reopening weekend are posted on the base Facebook page: Facebook.com/Westover.Patriot



photo by TSgt. Brian Boynton

the chief said he’d hoped to slip quietly into retirement, but that a couple friends pressured him to have a ceremony for his squadron’s sake. SMSgt. Savoie said the chief always looked out for his Airmen. “Anybody from junior Airmen to the highest ranking officers, if they needed something, the guy would give the shirt off of his back. That’s the kind of guy he is,” said SMSgt. Savoie. After a short speech to his Air Force family, CMSgt. Lojkuc punctuated the final chapter of his 25-year military career like a Marine: “God bless the U.S., farewell and Semper Fi.”

-- “APS” continued from page 9 The two chiefs were close friends from the beginning of their Air Force careers and spurred each other along, always in a friendly competition to see who could do what better. “He was the Airman I wanted by my side,” said SMSgt. Savoie, who took over as chief of operations from CMSgt. Lojkuc. Chief Lojkuc deployed four times during his tenure with the 58th. He said there was a lot of stress downrange, but after his experience in 1979, he felt like he wanted to get back in there, do more and make things right. At his retirement ceremony,

PROMOTIONS

Master Sergeant Tracy Doherty
Melvin Lewis
George Romvos
Michael Sumner
Rosalind Whitted
Technical Sgt. Kyle Davis
Bryan Healy
Cathleen Henneberry
Michelle Spellman
Eric Stager
Joseph Kibe
Steven Frost

Staff Sergeant Dimitri Celstin
Thomas Daly
Michael Fortier
Daniel Galioto
Matthew Smith

Senior Airman Jeremy Andreaso
Jenny Banner
Joseph Beasley
Xandria Budney
Ronald Geronimo
Michael Hernandez
Jayna Milledge
Paul Neves
Darnell Tucker

Airman First Class Timothy Crawford
Ryan Gildersleeve
Lorie Morgan

Airman Kody Anischik
Coralys Calderas-Vega
Nicole Echevarria
Brooke Levy
Selina Ortega
Brian Rodriguez

USO
hosts a weekly
family dinner every
Monday
at 4 p.m., Bldg. 1100

FACES OF WESTOVER



SrA. Sergey Grigoryan
42nd Aerial Port Squadron

Fleeing the first Chechen War, then 15-year-old Sergey Grigoryan sought refuge in Brooklyn, N.Y., with his parents. “Back in the early ‘90s when the war was going on in Russia, it was a dangerous place to grow up, not to mention the school systems were very corrupt,” SrA. Grigoryan said. He didn’t know any English when he started high school in America. He was forced to learn on the spot. A few years later, at age 18, SrA. Grigoryan took and passed the tests to enlist in the armed forces. “My cousin told me to wait and see what I could become in the civilian world, so I did.” After six years of obtaining on-the-job training, working with not only Iron Chef Morimoto but also Iron Chef Bobby Flay in New York, he decided to obtain an education at the Art Institute in New York for pastry baking. “Even after all that, I still wanted to join the Air Force,” SrA. Grigoryan said. In May 2012, he signed a contract with the Air Force Reserve as an air transportation specialist, assigned to the 42nd APS. When asked what he liked the most about the military, he stated

matter-of-factly that “he loves the camaraderie. “It takes a certain calibre of person to be in the military... not everyone in this world is willing to put their life on the line.” “My ultimate goal is to get as involved with the military as I can and be as effective and useful as possible.”

-- SSgt. Kelly Goonan

RETIREMENTS |

Lieutenant Colonel Joseph Freitas	Senior Master Sergeant Jason Smith	Technical Sergeant Horace Robinson
Major Carole Dube	Master Sergeant Lewis Labianca Bruce Lamay Kevin Kroyman	Staff Sergeant Lawrence Remo
Chief Master Sergeant Kurt Kohler		

SERVICES CALENDER |

Submitted by Mollie Anello, services marketing assistant

CLUB >> Paint Nite! Feb. 18, 7 p.m. Get tickets at paintnite.com, and use WARB15 to save \$15. Tickets sell out quickly. The Club will be featuring lounge theme nights; Manic Mon. - Karaoke with pizza specials; Twisted Tues. - Nacho bar with a twist; Wing Wed.: 35-cent Wings! In house only; Trivia Thurs. - prizes, drink and food specials ; Feisty Fri. - different each week. The lounge opens at 3 p.m. Information: 557-2039.

BOWLING CENTER >> “Be my Valentine” Scotch-Doubles Tournament. Feb. 14 and 15, bowl between 5 to 11 p.m., \$12 per couple; nine pin no-tap, couples will bowl four games, alternating shots every other ball. Information: 557-3990.

FITNESS CENTER >> There are a variety of workout DVD’s to choose from. A great work out for groups. Talk with one of the Fitness Center Staff today! The workout DVD’s can be checked out at the front desk. Information: 557-3958.

OUTDOOR REC >> Rent winter activity supplies - snowshoes, skis, toboggans and ice-fishing equipment, tip ups, jigging poles, ice shelter, power auger, and more! Call 557-2192.

POPE’S PUNS |

by W.C.Pope





Published monthly for Patriots like SrA. Ashley Eleby, New Britain, Conn., and more than 5,500 people assigned to Westover Air Reserve Base.

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WELCOME HOME >> A spirited homecoming for returning deployed members of the 439th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron took place Jan. 12 at Bradley International Airport. Squadron leadership welcomed the reservists home following their deployment to Southwest Asia. (photo by SSgt. Kelly Goonan)