

Southern Flyer



908th Airlift Wing (Air Force Reserve Command), Maxwell Air Force Base, Montgomery, Ala., Vol. 42, Issue 12, December 2005

Aerial porters complete tour, return home

About 40 25th Aerial Port Squadron Reservists returned to Maxwell Nov. 8, completing a year-long deployment in support of Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom. The Airmen received a warm welcome at the aerial port hangar from wing and unit officials, friends, family members and well-wishers. At right, Tech. Sgt. Reggie Smith poses for a picture with his family. Bottom left, Tech. Sgt. Wilfredo Navidad poses for a picture with his family. Bottom right, Senior Airman Jonathan West gets a smile from his nephew, Jackson. Sergeants Smith and Navidad were particularly happy to see their infant daughters for an extended time. The Reservists witnessed the infants birth but had to resume their deployments shortly after.



Photos by Jeff Melvin



DOD tightens security, requires 100 percent network account revalidation

It won't be business as usual for unit members attempting to access their network accounts just prior to and during the December UTA.

As a part of sign in on Saturday of the UTA, Comm Flight members will be checking each person's I.D. and having them sign a roster. These steps are part of a DOD-mandated 100 percent physical validation of all unclassified network user accounts.

All network account passwords will be flagged to be changed at first log in after Nov. 29.

"The validation process will require all users desiring to maintain their accounts, to confirm their identity by presenting their ID cards and signing their name. 908th Comm Flight, our Client Support Administrators and the Maxwell Support Division helpdesk will be working feverishly on this massive project," said Staff Sgt. Keith Rudolph, chief, information systems flight.

All fulltimers and members here on orders will be validated by Nov. 28, Sergeant Rudolph said.

Those who are still deployed, TDY, and traditional reservists will have their accounts validated temporarily, based upon their next scheduled return date (for most it's the Dec UTA).

Most wing members will be validated during sign-in at their units Saturday of the Dec UTA, so plan to arrive a little earlier than normal. Deployed/TDY personnel should plan to visit Comm Flight upon returning to their unit. The policy allows returning members five days from their scheduled return date to visit the Comm flight in Building 848 to accomplish revalidation to prevent the disabling of their accounts.

Wing bids farewell to wing commander, spouse

Tickets are on sale now through Dec. 16 for Col. and Mrs. Heath Nuckolls' farewell dinner.

The dinner is set for Thursday, Jan. 5, 6:30 p.m. at the Maxwell AFB Maxwell Officers' Club Ballroom. A no-host social in the Gold Room at 6 p.m. precedes the dinner.

Tickets cost \$12; dress is business casual. For tickets, see Lt. Col. Poteat, 908 AW/CCE.

The menu will be "Bama" BBQ Buffet which consists of barbecue brisket, baked beans, potato salad, coleslaw, buttermilk biscuits, apple or peach cobbler, "Southern" sweet tea with lemon or coffee.

Top 3, enlisted call to follow wing commander's call

Two additional meetings will follow the regularly scheduled quarterly wing commander's call.

An enlisted call with Col. Heath Nuckolls and a Top Three call with 908AW Command Chief Amos Moore will be held immediately following the Dec. 3 Wing Commanders Call.

May year ahead hold love-filled bright tomorrows

A little more than 2,000 years ago a young child was born that changed the course of history.

He grew up in obscurity. In fact little is known about his boyhood days. As the story goes, some wise men brought him gifts at birth. When he was around 30 years old he began to preach and teach about gentleness, love, meekness of spirit and promises of better tomorrows.

While this message was not well received by all; many embraced his message. The concept



By Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Bob Anders
908th AW Chaplain's Office

flourished. It is still alive and well in our world today.

Twenty plus centuries

have come and gone since that message was first proclaimed, and we find that the message has not entirely banished the darker side of humanity. War has not ended. There is still cruelty, greed and the miseries of mankind still abound. But the essence of that message still offers a continuing vision of a better, purer world in which we could participate, were we to consciously choose to do so.

This season of the year always brings with it the opportunity to reflect on what has taken place over

the last 12 months, (and there has been a lot). It presents the opportunity to contemplate what this next year of tomorrows may bring for all of us.

My prayer for you and yours in this season is that there will be lots of happiness and celebration and the year ahead will hold many bright tomorrows filled with gentleness and love.

And regarding those wise men that brought gifts ... I would follow their lead. (Portions of this seasonal thought were inspired by Reader's Digest, Dec 1999)

'First Shirt' candidates meet board in January

The next annual First Sergeant Board is set for Sunday of the January UTA in the Command Chief's conference room at 9 a.m.

The purpose of this board is to have a pool of qualified applicants interested in becoming First Sergeants readily available, 908AW Command Chief Master Sgt. Amos Moore, said.

"If a position becomes available, I will be in a position to offer the prospective commander names of the top candidates from the most recent board for their consideration. This will reduce, by at least three UTAs, the amount of time it has taken in the past to announce the vacancy, convene a board and schedule an interview with the prospective commander," Chief Moore said.

If no vacancies occur, or an applicant is not selected, applicants are free to re-apply the next year. All applicants must meet the board in

Service Dress uniform.

Interested applicants should submit their military/civilian resume, copies of their last three enlisted performance appraisals, a current records review listing, a letter of recommendation from their commander and a letter detailing he or she would like to be a first sergeant. This information should be provided to Master Sgt. Cynthia Barker, 908 MPF, Building 1056, not later than 4 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 4.

Chief Moore cited three useful sources for those interested in finding out more information about the First Sergeant career field: AFMAN 36-8001, Reserve Personnel Participation and Training Procedures, Chapter 8, para 8.2.6; AFMAN 36-2108, Airman Classification and AFI 36-2113, The First Sergeant, Chapter 11.

AFMAN 36-8001, Chapter 8, para 8.2.6 lists the special instructions for retraining into

the first sergeant special identifier 8F000.

AFMAN 36-2108 describes the duties and responsibilities, along with special duty qualifications for the special duty identifier 8F000, First Sergeant. "The duties listed primarily pertain to the Active Duty, but are very applicable dur-

ing AEF rotations and other deployments supporting active duty; it also gives you a big picture of the role of the First Sergeant," Chief Moore said.

AFI 36-2113, Chapter 11, explains the Roles and Responsibilities of the AFRC first sergeant.

1st Sgts want to spread holiday cheer

The First Sergeants' Christmas Clearinghouse provides assistance to families of our 908th Airlift Wing by providing monetary relief in the form of gift cards to members in financial need. Wing members are requested to identify military members within your organization with families you may know who need assistance. Assistance will also be provided to families separated due to

TDY or Mobilization or AEF assignments.

You can help. Referral forms are available with from First Sergeants. Complete and return referral forms to your First Sergeant no later than close of business Dec. 3.

You can also make a contribution to the fund in order to brighten someone's holiday with a gift of caring. As always the First Sergeants will be collecting money at our Wing Commander's Call Saturday, Dec. 3.

DOD moves to ensure continuity of care for Guard, Reserve families

TRICARE Reserve Family Benefit gets two-year extension

FALLS CHURCH, Va. — The TRICARE Reserve Family Demonstration Benefit that was due to end Oct. 31, has been extended through Oct. 31, 2007.

The Department of Defense extended the benefit for an additional two years to ensure continuity of care for family members of approximately 170,000 National Guard and Reserve members called to active duty for more than 30 days in support of

Operation Noble Eagle/Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The demonstration waives the TRICARE annual deductible for family members who use TRICARE Extra or Standard; waives the pre-authorization requirement for non-emergency inpatient civilian care at civilian hospitals; and authorizes TRICARE to pay non-participating providers up to 115 percent of the TRICARE maximum allowable charge.

"The demonstration makes it less expensive for these family members to continue seeing their usual doctors if they take TRICARE," said Steve Lillie, deputy chief, TRICARE Operations. "The demonstration does not apply to families who enroll in TRICARE Prime since there are no deductibles or cost shares for referred care in TRICARE Prime," Lillie said.

National Guard and Reserve members and family members with questions or in need of assistance may use the TRICARE Yellow Pages available at www.tricare.osd.mil/yellowpages to contact their TRICARE regional contractor. Up-to-date TRICARE information is also available on the TRICARE Web site at www.tricare.osd.mil/reserve. (Courtesy of Tricare Management Activity)



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Because of the printing and mail-out schedule the newspaper goes to press on Friday, two weeks prior to the UTA. The submission deadline for articles or information is the Wednesday two weeks prior to the UTA.

For information about this schedule, call Jeff Melvin at (334) 953-7874.

Wing practices ability to respond to enemy attack

Portions of the wing participated in an enemy attack response exercise Nov. 5. Wing Performance Plans Officer Maj. Troy Vonada said the exercise met all objectives. The exercise focused on two key stressors, command and control and dressing out in chemical warfare gear. Unit Control Centers, the Survival Recovery Center, Wing Operations Center and the Wing Command Post received close attention. Evaluators noted that sense of urgency, communication of alarm conditions, proper wear of chemical warfare gear and possessing the airman's manual are areas for improvement. "I was pleased with what was accomplished. We're an outstanding wing and have the experience, knowledge and will to surpass expectations that any IG team can throw at us. More importantly, we've got ample time to prepare for the next ORI," Major Vonada said. A command and control tabletop in the Spring and another enemy attack exercise in the Fall are tentatively planned.



908CES members clean weapons prior to turning them in to the field armory.



908AW Commander Col. Heath Nuckolls, 908MXS Commander Col. Kerry Kohler and 908MSG Commander Col. Bill Forshey complete checklist taskings at the wing operations center



908CES Senior Airmen Don Fykes and James Lewis (standing, left right) provide assistance to squadron members completing various computer training requirements during the exercise.



Staff Sgt. Dennis Ellis, far right, gives CES troops instruction on erecting a "Small Shelter System," the next generation shelter from the temper tent.



Photos by Jeff Melvin

908MSG's Senior Airman Cortrell Mandosia takes cover.

Civil engineers manager set to finish stellar military career

By Jeff Melvin
908AW Public Affairs

Upon meeting and listening to Chief Master Sgt. Johnny Ray Thigpen, who retires this UTA, one could be forgiven for subconsciously humming a few bars of John Denver's "Thank God I'm A Country Boy" but on closer inspection one soon finds that a more appropriate song could easily be soul diva's Aretha Franklin's "R-E-S-P-E-C-T."

It seems that after 38 years of service and countless accomplishments in his civilian and military life, the Civil Engineering manager from Rogersville, Ala. regards respect or at least the simple acknowledgment of a younger subordinate's respect for him as one of his lasting memories.

The simple yet moving event occurred years back during a TDY in one of the 21 countries and 49 states Chief Thigpen's military and civilian duties have taken him to.

The young enlisted member was saying thanks for the chief's practice over the years of never turning in until "I know everyone is safe and accounted for, guess it stems from having men staying in hotels all over the Southeast working for me."

The young man walked up to the chief in the NCO Club in Germany, extended his hand and said, "I just want to tell you how much I respect you."

That gesture, Thigpen said, meant more to him than any of his numerous honors.

"To me that (respect) is everything. It's how you get people to work for you, it's what motivates people. That (respect) is the reason people will follow you. People don't follow you because they fear you; they follow you because they respect you and know that you're going to take care of them."

That speaks volumes about the

"I got to thinking, 'I was good at this or if my being in could help stop another Vietnam or prevent my grandkids from getting drafted then I'll serve to the best of my ability as long as I can. ...'"

-- Chief Thigpen

man who's earned nothing but respect during 24 years in the 908th.

He started his military career in Army Reserve signal unit in Huntsville in 1966. After a stint in the Tennessee Air Guard, the young Thigpen passed up a chance to become an officer, thinking he didn't have enough dedication.

He transferred back to the Alabama Army Guard where to his dismay he suffered from several bouts of severe allergic reactions to poison oak. Not good since the Army Guard went to the field regularly. So after about seven years he left the military and stayed out 15 months before getting the urge to serve again.

"I got to thinking, 'I was good at this or if my being in could help stop another Vietnam or prevent my grandkids from getting drafted then I'll serve to the best of my ability as long as I can. So I joined a military police unit as a confinement specialist.'"

For seven years he served in the only Army Reserve specialty that didn't go to the field. The advent of the all-volunteer Army led to unit's demise. With an all volunteer force, the Army didn't confine as many soldiers as a rehabilitative tool but discharged those who presented disciplinary problems, thus lessening

the need for high numbers of confinement specialists.

His unit transitioned to POW handlers, so Chief Thigpen ended up back in the field and experienced another allergic reaction to poison oak.

Just when it appeared he would have to end his military career, he heard about an Air Force Reserve unit down at Maxwell.

Fortunately for him the unit desperately needed a concrete finisher, something he'd been doing for years in his civilian life. He didn't have to give up a stripe and transferred to the Air Force as a

technical sergeant.

His supervisor was then-Master Sgt. (now Col.) Bill Forshey, now the 908th Mission Support Group commander.

Putting his real life construction experience to good use, he has worked in virtually all areas of civil engineering -- operations, structures, engineering, equipment. He voluntarily took and passed the career development courses for five separate CE specialties.

He moved to his current position, CE manager, about five years ago.

Just as he has progressed in the military, he's also made great strides in his civilian life, having owned a concrete contracting business for a number of years.

While some may make the case that his contributions over the years have kept the civil engineers squadron on solid footing; none can dispute the fact he literally built the unit's home, pouring concrete (on a civilian contract) for Building 1055.

His civilian firm also poured concrete for the old base CE building, now DynCorp. He also poured concrete at the Montgomery's newest mall, the Shoppes at Eastchase, has poured high rises in Birmingham and Nashville, and many other locations throughout the Southeast.

He also played a primary role in erecting what many consider the most recognizable symbol of Maxwell AFB's Air University, the 'Wings and Propeller' Tactical Air Corps School monument and courtyard in front of AU Headquarters. (See sidebar story, next page) His success in the concrete and construction arena was, perhaps, inevitable, considering his early start.

Even though he worked as an apprentice concrete finisher for five years and a journeyman for 3 years, he started even earlier. His father poured concrete and "I was helping pour concrete before I could even remember," Chief Thigpen said.

"I heard daddy talk about us meeting one of his business associates and the man asking 'is this that boy that climbed those scaffolds that time.' Of course, I didn't remember but evidently daddy had gone to a site to pick up his check and I had gotten out of the car and climbed up six flights of scaffolding and they were hollering for me to get down. I was so young I didn't even remember so I guess you could say I've been in construction all my life."

After nearly 24 years in the civil engineers squadron what stands out most isn't any of the work projects, the chief said.

"It's the people absolutely because I don't even think of it as work I've done. It's work the people have done because you can't get anything done by yourself. And if the people don't help then you don't move anywhere."

The secret to the squadron's

success, he said, is the great officers who groomed and mentored their successors. That mentoring "reflects back down into the airman ranks and through the superintendents -- it's just a great unit."

He sees similarity between what the CES leadership does grooming/mentoring Airmen and what he does in civilian life, pouring concrete, building structures, etc.

"What we do in my job is get young people. We start them out as laborers and if they show potential we give them raises. You just bring them along same way as you do here. Someday they'll become concrete finishers if they have it in them because either you're born to do construction work or not."

Although he's now approaching nearly 40 years of service, the years, he said, have rolled by.

"I made the commitment to serve to the best of my ability for as long as I could, so I never thought of it in terms of years."

And when he says to the best of his ability, he means that without exception and in spite of the sacrifice. A 2003 deployment to Eastern Europe, illustrates the lengths he'll go to honor that commitment.

He weathered back surgery, missed an anniversary and temporarily closed his business to meet his commitments as a project manager for Cornerstone 03, a multinational military engineering exercise that took place in Constanta, Romania, May 15 through July 15, 2003.

The exercise brought together military engineers from Albania, Bulgaria, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Greece, Romania, Turkey and the United States for military and humanitarian engineering projects.

One of several exercise projects was the repair and upgrade of a Romanian military air base. Two new helicopter pads, an aircraft parking apron and an access road were to be constructed during the eight-week exercise.

Since placing concrete for projects like this wasn't a regular task for the Air Force engineers, Thigpen had to figure out a way to get the equipment they would need, equipment that certainly wasn't available in Romania.

When he located the equipment he needed stateside, he either bought or rented what was required and arranged to have it shipped to Alabama.

"I made the commitment to serve to the best of my ability for as long as I could, so I never thought of it in terms of years."

-- Chief Thigpen



Chief Master Sgt. Johnny R. Thigpen

Photo by Jeff Melvin

Then it was wrapped in shrink wrap, placed on pallets and flown to Romania.

Once the equipment was obtained, Thigpen just had to get himself to Romania. But before he could fly overseas, he first had to endure major back surgery.

A piece of vertebra had broken off during a car accident in December 2002. The vertebra got into a disk in his back and surgery was required to fix it. Thigpen wouldn't let that keep him from his military obligation. He scheduled surgery so it wouldn't affect Cornerstone planning and the mission.

When time to start the project approached, the chief realized "No one else knew how to use the equipment."

So Thigpen became the lead trainer for the project. He trained and led troops from the U.S. and other nations on how to use the equipment needed to place, shape and smooth concrete for the massive project.

"I was only going to stay 2 weeks but I when I realized we were going to do it all with Reservists I knew we wouldn't be able to get the job done (on schedule). So I closed my business down, went over there and stayed eight weeks 'til we got the concrete down."

The civil engineers poured more than 6,000 cubic meters of concrete in three weeks.

"That shows his commitment to this project," said then-Senior Master Sgt. Luis Ayala, a Reservist from Lackland AFB, Texas, the project chief. "He does a lot of big construction projects and he closed down his whole business to come here."

"I'm sure it cost him a lot of money but he's dedicated to the military."

It was the longest amount of time Thigpen had ever been away from home since he joined the military and went to basic training more than three decades ago.

To top it all off, his one-year wedding anniversary took place while he was in Romania.

But Thigpen shrugged off the hurdles he faced and sacrifices he endured to keep the exercise on track.

"It was a personal and professional sacrifice for him to go there," said 908CES commander Maj. Scott Fallon, then the operations officer for the Cornerstone 03 project. "But he's a dedicated person and no one can outwork him."

"He's a dedicated person and no one can outwork him."
-- Major Fallon

"Chief Thigpen is a phenomenal, extraordinary individual," Major Fallon added. "He does this because he loves it and he loves training people."

Just as they have in so many other instances, his military and civilian life are in sync on this issue, too.

Chief Thigpen said he enjoys teaching and what he calls "feeding families."

Learning a trade, he said, helps people put food on the table, helps them earn wages which, in turn, allow them to get married, and start families.

"That's very satisfying," he said. "And it's the same way here at the 908th (or in the military in general). You touch people's lives and you try to be a role model."

Reflecting on his impending retirement, Chief Thigpen offered a few parting remarks.

First of all, he said, "I've been very lucky in having good people under me. The kids under me got me promoted. To me the people above you, they promote you; but the people below you are the ones that get you promoted."

He also said there were two or three times in his career that he felt like getting out "but I had made a commitment to doing the best I could for as long as I could and the promotions came."

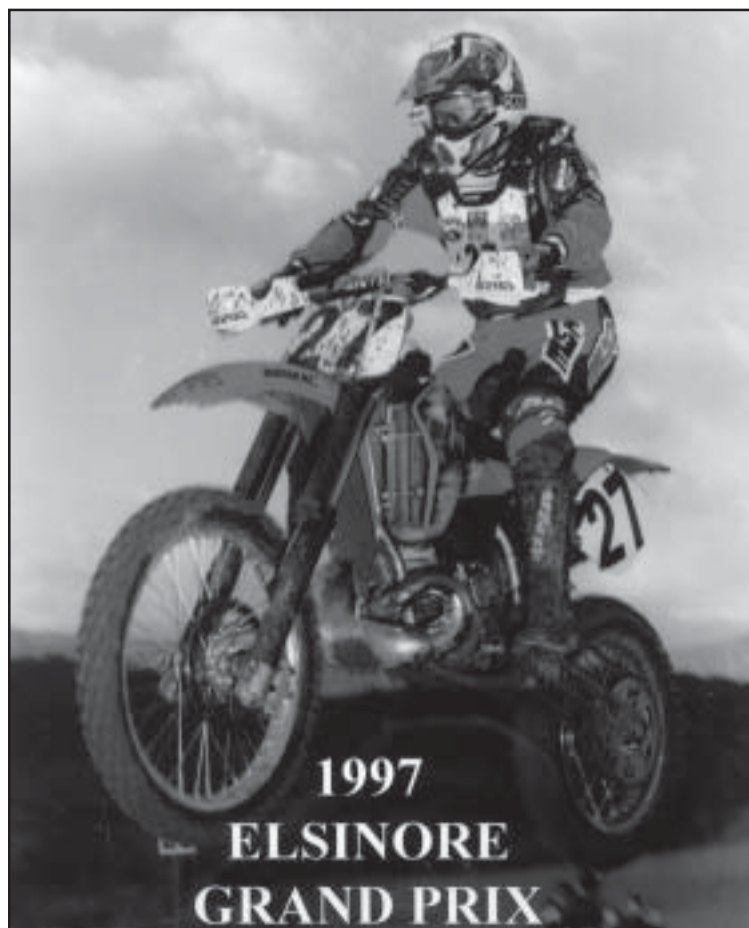
Plus, he said with a hearty laugh, "I probably outlived everybody else."

So when someone tells him they're getting out because they've reached an impasse or barrier and say they can't get promoted, "I tell them, 'Well what chance will you have if you get out. You have to be in to take advantage of the opportunity when it presents itself.'"

Speaking of taking advantage of opportunities, retirement, the chief said, will give him a chance to enjoy his other passion, motor biking. It seems he's been an avid rider almost as long he's been in the military. About to hit the big 6-0 next August, he has no plans to slow down. He plans to ride just like he served, "as best as he can for as long as he can."



Courtesy photos



Chief Thigpen indulges in his other passion, motorcross, during a event in California.

Above, Chief Thigpen sits atop the stand for the Air Corps Tactical School monument during its construction. Former 908th Support Group and Civil Engineers Squadron commander retired Col. Don Brown said Thigpen's contribution to the project was invaluable. "The construction as envisioned was complicated, expensive and virtually unobtainable. However, not only did Chief Thigpen provide the needed voluntary manpower at no cost to the project, but he brought his extraordinary civilian skill as a concrete contractor to form and finish this monument," said Colonel Brown, a civilian architect and prominent Montgomery-area civic leader. The "Wings and Propeller" is now widely used as the symbol for the Air University and the backdrop for important photographs. "Without Chief Thigpen this monument would clearly have taken a much less impressive form. He cannot be given enough credit for this creation of this extraordinary image of American air power which will endure for decades," Brown said. Talking about his role in the project, Chief Thigpen said, "Everybody said it couldn't be done. I poured concrete forms, set it, hand rubbed it for texture and designed the courtyard."

Aircrew apply training, avert accident when parachute malfunctions during airdrop

By Lt. Col. Jerry Lobb
908AW Public Affairs Officer

A 908th Airlift Wing aircrew experienced an "interesting" first, Nov. 3. For the first time in the history of the 908th, a crew experienced an airdrop malfunction.

The extraction parachute was released but failed to inflate to pull the training load from the aircraft.

"Everything about the flight was normal until the loadmaster called a malfunction," said aircraft commander, Capt. Jeremy Mickelson.

Loadmasters Staff Sgt. John Metcalf, Airman 1st Class Danny Brown and instructor Tech. Sgt. Sheldon Britt were standing forward of the heavy equipment load when the extraction chute deployed but failed to inflate. Metcalf called up to the flight deck alerting them to the malfunction.

Metcalf and Brown hooked up the emergency restraint chains to keep the load from being extracted outside the drop zone. Once the chains were in place, Sergeant Metcalf went behind the load awaiting the aircraft

commander's order to cut the extraction chute.

As Captain Mickelson began to turn the aircraft back toward the drop zone to cut the parachute loose, the chute suddenly inflated.

"When the chute suddenly inflated it gave the load a tug," Sergeant Metcalf said. "My heart was in my throat at that point. I was scared. We knew we had to cut the extraction line."

Meanwhile on the flight deck Captain Mickelson increased power to maintain airspeed with an inflated parachute trailing behind the aircraft. Once over the drop zone he told the loadmasters to cut the extraction line. Metcalf cut the extraction line and was snapped by the line as it broke free. It stung a bit but left him uninjured.

Metcalf said that during the entire incident he was thinking about all the briefings he'd had on airdrop malfunctions.

"We always brief this, but I never expected I'd have to actually do it."

He said he was thankful all the briefings stuck and he knew what to do. "So we did it by the book, and cut the extraction line, finished our checklists and returned to Maxwell. Fortunately everything worked the way we've been trained and we all came home uninjured," the loadmaster said.

Chief Master Sgt. Michael Harper pronounced Metcalf's new nickname is now "Blade" Metcalf.

Other crew members on the flight were: pilot, 1st Lt. John Moody; navigator, Maj. Walt Chase and flight engineer Tech. Sgt. Joe Houston.

Captain Mickelson said that other than the loadmaster's "malfunction" call over the interphone, a casual observer might not have known that an emergency had been encountered and resolved.

"The crew was calm, cool and collected. I think the bottom line here is professionalism. I am extremely pleased with the performance of the entire crew, all are to be commended," the aircraft commander said.

DOD readies to implement revamped labor system

By Master Sgt. Mitch Gettle
Air Force Print News

WASHINGTON (AFPN) -- The National Security Personnel System will provide a more performance- and market-based system of hiring, pay and evaluation.

With NSPS, Department of Defense civilians can influence the amount of money they will receive by their performance, their value to the organization and their mission accomplishment contributions, said Sharon Seymour, the Air Force associate director of personnel plans and integration for NSPS.

She said NSPS is a positive change because employees will have more control over their advancement and pay, versus being tied to a time-based system.

The NSPS labor system becomes effective and DOD employees will fall under the new labor law after a 30-

day congressional notification period ends in late November.

DOD will request input from union representatives regarding the details of pay banding, staffing, performance management and other aspects of the new system. This period is called continuing collaboration and is expected to end in January 2006, Ms. Seymour said.

Implementation of the NSPS will then begin and continue throughout the year. On-site training for supervisors and employees is part of the NSPS implementation plan. By March 2006, the Air Force expects 50,000 employees to be covered under the new NSPS, Ms. Seymour said.

"Under the current system, employees receive incremental pay raises annually and within-grade pay raises after a certain number of years," Ms. Seymour said. "One of the best things NSPS will do for the Air Force is allow good employees to

flourish under this system."

Under NSPS, classification will be simplified and streamlined and will include broad groupings of occupations based on the nature of work, career patterns and market factors. These groupings are called "pay bands."

These pay schedules will replace the current GS and, eventually, the wage system pay schedule. "As we move toward implementation, civilians will receive more information about where they fit in the pay schedules under NSPS," Ms. Seymour said.

Civilian employees moved under NSPS won't take a pay cut and most will receive an increase in pay when the implementation takes place, she said.

"Many employees will receive a pay increase equal to the amount they have earned toward their next within-grade-increase," Ms. Seymour said.

AFRC switches to Web-based education system

ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga. – Air Force reservists can now track their education progress, request transcripts, and update personal education information on the Web.

Going through the Air Force Portal (<https://www.my.af.mil>) and accessing the Virtual Education Center's Web site – <https://afvec.langley.af.mil> – saves reservists time and money as they will now be able to perform some tasks previously done by their military personnel flight. The service became available to reservists Oct. 1.

This transformation of customer service is the result of Air Force Reserve Command joining the active-duty Air Force Automated Education Management System. Under AFAEMS, Reserve education and training offices have access to the same services as the active-duty counterparts.

Unit reservists can learn more about AFVEC from wing education and training offices.

In more education-related news, the Education and Training Course Announcement web site is now available from your home or from any non .mil computer through the Air Force Portal.

Link to the ETCA: <https://rso.my.af.mil/etacourses/>

To gain access to the AF Portal, a username and password is required. Everyone should have access to the AF Portal.

Access to the AF Portal will also provide access to the Virtual MPF and MyPay (no need to remember multiple passwords.) Favorite web sites can be stored on your "Web Favorites" link, and then you can access them from anywhere in the world. This also comes in handy if your computer crashes so can add them back in again.

Every student should read the course announcement for each formal school scheduled to attend. Now that this can be done in the comfort of each member's home, this should be easier to do. (Excerpted from an AFRC News Service)

DeCA again offers scholarships for military children

Money for college is "what's cooking" at 268 military commissaries worldwide as the Scholarships for Military Children program begins its sixth year of rewarding academic excellence.

Applications for the 2006 scholarship program are available at any commissary worldwide, online at the Military Scholar Web site or through a link at <http://www.commissaries.com>, DeCA's customer Web site. Eligibility

and other information is also available at the Military Scholar Web site.

Applications, which must include an essay on why the applicant admires a great military leader (past or present), have to be turned in at a commissary by Feb. 22, 2006. At least one \$1,500 scholarship will be awarded at every commissary location with qualified applicants.

The program is open to unmarried children under the age of 21 (23 if enrolled in school) of active duty per-

sonnel, Reserve, Guard and retired military. Applicants should ensure that they, as well as their sponsor, are currently enrolled in the DEERS database and have a current ID card.

The applicant must be planning to attend, or already attending, an accredited college or university full-time in the fall term of 2006, or enrolled in a program of studies designed to transfer directly into a four-year program.

Take Note

Congratulations to the following people:

Promotions

....to Senior Master Sgt.
Woodard Johnson, ASTS
Kymberly Corkum, MXS

....to Master Sgt.
Marty Ashley, MXS
Thomas Boothe Jr., CES

Thomas Brookins, CES
Alison Gomez, 357AS
Oran Hudson, 908AW
William Moore, MOF
Keith Tareco, MXS
Richard Taylor, AMXS

....to Tech. Sgt.
Grady Driver, SFS
Mitchell Dulkiewicz, 357AS
Brian Harper, AMXS
LaShaundra Gardner, ASTS

....to Staff Sgt.
Wendell Gatlin, MXS
Roy Hart Jr., AMXS
Kenia Humphrey, ASTS

....to Senior Airman
Brandon Ballenger, MXS
Christopher Barbour, SVF
Brian Barkley, SFS
Nicole Blue, CES

Miranda Boswell, ASTS
James Bowler, 25APS
Joshua Burton, 357AS
Jamal Dewberry, 25APS

Bryant Culpepper, 25APS
Tyler Harrison, ASTS
Anthony Haslip, MXS
Keith Hayden Jr., LRS
Matthew Johnson, SFS
Andrea Lambertini, MXS

Amy Lindstrom, 908AW
Angela Roland, SFS
Randy Stephens, CES
Eric Thornton, LRS
Alex Williams, LRS
Decica Williamson, ASTS

....to Airman First Class
Jeffrey Folds, CES
Vannisha Howard, MSG

Jaran James, MXS
Aaron Knight, MXS
Ryan Miller, MXS
Dewanna Robinson, ASTS

Jamaal Thompson, LRS
....to Airman
Jarren Morgan, LRS

Retirements
Senior Master Sgt. Leonard N. Cesna, AMXS
Tech. Sgt. Jaime A. Baca, 357AS

unified command. This year, the board reviewed more than 160 nomination packages, representing nearly 12,000 Air Force intelligence professionals.

22nd Air Force commander receives presidential award

WASHINGTON – Maj. Gen. James Donald Bankers, 22nd Air Force commander, received a presidential rank award for 2005.

Thirteen senior executive service civilians from throughout the Air Force earned the award. Air Force Print News announced the winners Oct. 21 after White House officials named the award recipients.

General Bankers is a dual-status air reserve technician – a federal employee and a reservist – in Air Force Reserve Command at Dobbins Air Reserve Base, Ga.

The awards recognize career senior executive service and senior professional individuals. They are leaders, professionals and scientists who achieve results and consistently demonstrate strength, integrity, industry and a relentless commitment to excellence in public service.

General Bankers was one of 10 people to get the meritorious award for sustained accomplishment. The award includes a lump-sum payment of 20 percent of base pay. It is limited to 5 percent of the career senior executive service, defense intelligence senior executive service, or senior level scientific or professional government-wide population.

CGOC seeks food for needy

The 908th Company Grade Officer Council is sponsoring a Food Drive for those in need during the upcoming holiday season. Canned and non-perishable food items of any kind are welcomed.

To collect these goods, the CGOC will place boxes in each squadron during the December UTA.

All items will be collected by 1 p.m. Sunday afternoon and then delivered to The Salvation Army, said 2nd Lt. Teri Miller, CGOC president.

"We could not achieve this event without the help of unselfish people that give," the lieutenant said.

Wing Suicide Prevention make up training sessions set

The Wing Suicide Prevention training make up is scheduled for Saturday, Dec. 3 at 8:30 a.m. and Sunday, Dec. 4 at 8:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. in the CE classrooms in Building 1055.

Any 908th member who didn't receive the training at September Wing Commander's Call should attend.

Fraud, Waste & Abuse Hotline contact information

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SAF -- Phone: toll free (800) 538-8429; Mail: SAF/IGQ, 1140 AF Pentagon, Washington, DC 20030-1140; E-mail: safiq@pentagon.af.mil

DoD -- Phone: toll free (800) 424-9098; Mail: Defense Hotline, The Pentagon, Washington, DC 20301-1900; E-mail: hotline@dodig.osd.mil
908AW -- Phone: DSN 493-3353, CMCL (334) 953-3353; Mail: 908AW/IG, 401 W. Maxwell Blvd, Maxwell AFB, AL 36112-6501; E-mail: nancy.stephenson@maxwell.af.mil



Photo by Lt. Col. Jerry Lobb

Senior NCO of the Quarter

908ASTS's Master Sgt. Theresa Murrell is the wing's top Senior NCO of the third quarter. Here she receives a recognition package from 908AW Command Chief Master Sgt. Amos Moore. 908MSF's Senior Airman Tifarah Boyd, 357AS's Tech. Sgt. Joe Houston, and 25APS's 1st Lt. Tonia Stephens were named Airman, NCO and Company Grade Officer of the Quarter, respectively.



Tech. Sgt. Emory Morgan Jr.



Staff Sgt. Michael Herman

Intel duo pick up AF awards

908th Operations Support Group intel analysts Tech. Sgt. Emory Morgan and Staff Sgt. Michael Herman traveled to Goodfellow AFB, Texas, Nov. 1 to attend the Air Force Intelligence Awards Program Banquet.

Sergeants Morgan and Herman were among the 27 people and two units in the intelligence career field recognized for outstanding performances and contributions. The OSF duo picked up awards as the Air Force's top (wing level and below) Reserve NCO and Airman of Year for 2004, respectively.

Individuals are nominated by their unit leadership and must be chosen by a selection panel at each echelon of command through the major or

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To the Family of: