

Southern Flyer



908th Airlift Wing (Air Force Reserve Command), Maxwell Air Force Base, Montgomery, Ala., Vol. 43, Issue 7, July 2006

Defense Dept. establishes mental health task force

WASHINGTON (AFP) -- The formation of a congressionally directed task force to examine matters related to mental health and the armed forces was announced June 21 by Defense Department officials.

"This is an extremely important effort involving a collaboration of DOD, federal and private sector experts in mental health," said Dr. William Winkenwerder Jr., assistant secretary of defense for health affairs.

The Mental Health Task Force, comprising of seven DOD members and seven non-DOD members, will submit a report to Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld in May. It will include assessments and recommendations for improving the efficacy of mental health services provided to service members by DOD and will begin meeting in July.

"High on the list will be steps for improving the awareness of potential mental health conditions among service personnel and ways to improve the access and effi-

cacy of our existing programs," Dr. Winkenwerder said.

Congress directed the establishment of the task force as part of the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal 2006. The Army surgeon general, Lt. Gen. Kevin C. Kiley, and a non-DOD rep-

resentative, to be elected by the task force membership, will co-chair the task force.

"Because of the challenging timeline established for the task force to do its work, the Armed Forces Epidemiology Board will support and serve as its parent organization," Dr. Winkenwerder said.

The Armed Forces Epidemiology Board is an ongoing independent scientific advisory committee to the secretary of defense through the assistant secretary for health affairs and the military surgeon generals. It deals with matters concerning opera-

tional programs, policy development and research needs for the prevention of disease and promotion of health.

Check the DOD Mental Health Task Force web site at <http://www.ha.osd.mil/afeb/mhtf/members.cfm> for more information.

Military, families can get online mental health screening

By Gerry J. Gilmore
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON (AFP) -- Military members and families coping with the stress of overseas deployments and other potential health-threatening issues can log onto the Internet to get help, said a U.S. military psychologist.

Servicemembers from all components and their families can obtain a mental health self-assessment or screening through a Web site co-sponsored by the Department of Defense and Screening for Mental Health Inc., a nonprofit organization, said Col. (Dr.) Joyce Adkins, a psychologist with the Force

Health Protection and Readiness directorate at the Defense Department's Health Affairs office.

"The (online) screening actually gets you to where you need to be in terms of counseling," Dr. Adkins said. "Once you do one of the screening checklists, it will give you the benefits that are available to you."

The Web site was brought online in January, and can be found at <http://www.mentalhealthscreening.org/military/index.aspx>.

The link to the survey is in the upper right corner of the Web page under "Click for anonymous self assessment." The site augments other DOD

mental health assistance resources, Dr. Adkins said. People logged onto the site are asked to answer a series of questions. The program "grades" the completed survey, Dr. Adkins said, and gives people an evaluation of their present mental health and provides assistance resources, if deemed necessary.

Other DOD-endorsed health sites tell customers how to access mental health counseling services, but do not provide an online mental health screening program, Dr. Adkins said.

National Guard and Reserve members returning from overseas deployments also are authorized to use the

Web site, Dr. Adkins said. Returning Reserve-component members have two years of health benefits provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Such services are especially important now because of the potential stressful effects deployments can have on both military and family members, Dr. Adkins said. The mental health screening Web site and other related programs available to servicemembers and their families provide "a level of benefits and a level of service to help them understand what services are available to them for mental health issues," Dr. Adkins said.

Deadlines near for officer education opportunities

ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga. - Sept. 15 is the deadline for Air Force Reserve Command officers to apply for next year's in-residence intermediate and senior developmental education courses.

Intermediate courses include the Air Command and Staff College, and the Joint Military Intelligence College. Senior courses include the Air, Army, Naval and National War College, Industrial College of the Armed Forces and the Harvard National Security Fellowship.

Instructions for submitting packages are on the Air Reserve Personnel Center's Web site under Air Force Reserve Developmental Education Designation Board at <http://arpc.afrc.af.mil/forcedevelopment/training/rddb.asp>

The board will decide in November who has been selected for a course.

In addition to regular continuing developmental education courses, AFRC has the opportunity to select two Reserve officers to attend the Canadian Forces College Joint Reserve Command and Staff Course.

Candidates must be a major or lieutenant colonel and be able to complete the course's four terms of study. The first three terms will be distance learning and require about 85 hours of course work.

The course ends in a two-week in-residence program July 7-20, 2007, in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. All nominations are due to AFRC A1TS by July 14.

Sylvia Rutland, manager of AFRC A1 Manpower and Personnel's officer developmental education program, can provide more information about these courses at 478-327-1291 or at DSN 497-1291, or via e-mail at sylvia.rutland@afrc.af.mil (AFRC News Service)

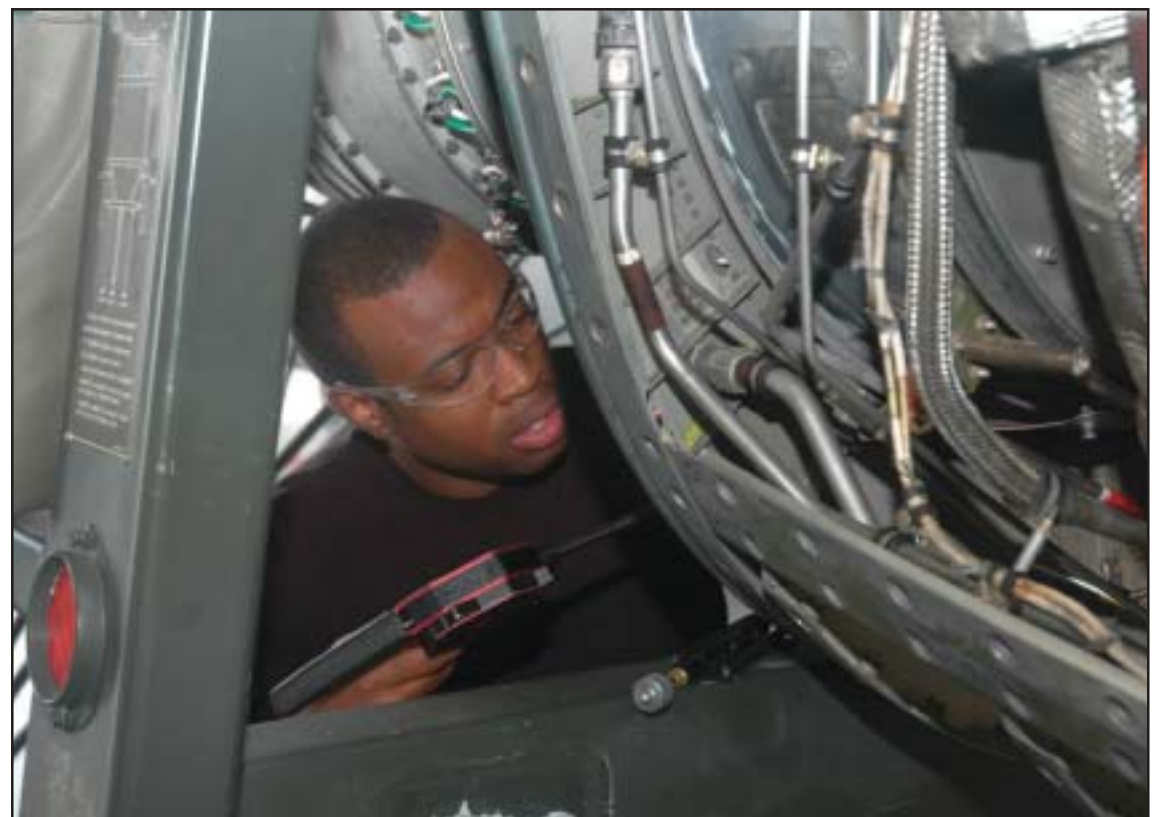


Photo by Jeff Melvin

Tight squeeze

Senior Airman Jaran James safety wires a dummy plug on this rebuilt turbine prior to installing an engine in aircraft 042. Airman James is a turboprop mechanic with the 908th Maintenance Squadron.

Air Force Reserve looks to volunteers to fight wars

Editor's note: The following is the second article in a four-part series on testimony before the U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations' Subcommittee on Defense April 26, 2006, by Lt. Gen. John A. Bradley, chief of Air Force Reserve and Air Force Reserve Command commander.

WASHINGTON – Air Force Reserve Command is relying more on volunteers and less on mobilized reservists to fight the war on terror, according to Lt. Gen. John A. Bradley, chief of Air Force Reserve and AFRC commander.

The operations tempo to meet the combatant commanders' requirements since 9/11 remains high said the general in testimony before the U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations' Subcommittee on Defense April 26. He does not expect the ops tempo to decrease significantly in the near future.

To make his point, General Bradley cited the

number of days Reserve aircrew members are performing military duty.

"Last year each of our aircrew members served an average of 91 days of military duty," he said. "This is a significant increase compared to an average 43 days of military duty per aircrew member in 2000, the last full calendar year before the start of the Global War on Terrorism, and more than double the minimum number of participation days required."

To meet continuing Air Force requirements since 9/11 and to make maximum use of the President's Partial Mobilization Authority, the Air Force Reserve has begun to rely more heavily on volunteerism versus significant additional mobilization.

"There are several critical operational units and military functional areas that must have volunteers to meet ongoing mission requirements because they are near the 24-month mobilization authority," the general said.

Volunteers are needed in C-130, MC-130, B-52, HH-60,

HC-130 and E-3 AWACS aircraft as well as security forces people.

During last year, the Air Force Reserve had 6,453 people mobilized and another 3,296 volunteers who served in lieu of mobilization to support the Global War on Terrorism. By the end of the year, it had 2,770 volunteers serving full-time to meet war requirements and 2,553 reservists mobilized for contingency operations.

"We expect this balance to become increasingly volunteer-based as this 'Long War' continues," he said.

To meet this increased need for volunteers, the Air Force Reserve has several ongoing initiatives to match the desires and skills of reservists with the needs of combatant commanders, according to the general.

"For example, the Integration Process Team we chartered to improve our volunteer process recently developed a prototype Web-based tool," he said. "It gives the reservist the ability to see all the positions validated for the combatant commanders and allows the Air Force

Reserve to see all qualified volunteers for placement. We must have the core capability to always match the right person to the right job at the right time.

"We also expect volunteerism will be positively affected as a result of the National Defense Authorization Act of 2005," he continued. "This act fosters more continuity in volunteerism because it adds flexibility to end-strength accounting rules and provides equal benefits for activated personnel."

Making it easier for reservists to volunteer not only gives them more control over their lives but also helps their family, employer and commander, he said.

"In turn this predictability allows for more advanced planning, lessens disruption, and, ultimately enables more volunteer opportunities," said General Bradley. "In the coming year, we will continue to seek ways to facilitate volunteerism as the primary means of providing the unrivaled support on which the Air Force has come to rely." (AFRC News Service)



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

Vacations work wonders, take time to recover, rebalance

By Col. Michael J. Underkofler
Commander, 908th Airlift Wing

I often ask you to recover mentally, spiritually, and physically from the demands of the recent high operations tempo. And I also ask you to rebalance your lives, putting your families and civilian employers, for now, ahead of us. If I ask you to do it, I should demonstrate that I will do it too, or "walk the talk" not just "talk the talk."

So, for the first time in my adult working life, I took a vacation by myself. After the June UTA my family helped me pack my bags, said bon voyage, and sent me out the door to Europe to do some things I've always wanted to do. I almost cancelled the trip because of several work commitments that popped up at the last minute. Instead, I respectfully asked my boss for permission to miss a few meetings and hand off work that needed to get done to some others here in the Wing. He agreed and with passport in hand, I walked out the door.



After serving as the "Best Man" for a wedding in Prague, Czech Republic, I traveled through northern Italy. With backpack strapped on, I took planes, trains, and buses to get to the villages my paternal family calls home.

I stayed in youth-hostel type hotels, hiked through the Dolomite mountains, watched World Cup Football and celebrated with the locals, ate lots of fruits and vegetables, drank gallons of

water, and nearly kicked my diet cola habit.

My spiritual batteries were recharged by visiting the places where my family is buried and worshiped. Simply walking through the hills, noticing delicate flora, cleared mental cobwebs. Although just shy of 44 years-old, I felt half that age. I was full of vim, vigor, and optimism about the future.

I can stand up in front of you and reiterate what the wellness studies tell us: vacations are really important. They can be restorative; ultimately improving long-term worker productivity and health. But I did it, I took a relaxing vacation and feel the benefits of doing so, and you should too.

Go with your family, some friends, or alone. Take a week off from work, longer if you can. You don't have to go to Europe; there are plenty of places to escape close to where we live. Don't worry about projects and timelines. Hand off work assignments and family tasks to others. Routinely

delegating responsibilities makes us all better.

Get plenty of rest. Operate on your own time clock. Be adventuresome--try something new. Incorporate physical fitness. Really stop to see the flora and fauna. Clear out the mental cobwebs and appreciate the wonders of it all. Connect to where you came from and where you're headed.

We're not machines. We don't all operate on the same preventative maintenance schedule. While I deeply appreciate and admire your seemingly never-ending service to the nation, be sure to take some time out and take care of yourself. No matter what section, flight, or squadron you work in, you need to be at the top of your game--mentally, physically, and spiritually when you put your uniform on. The many recent tragedies we've experienced here in the Wing only reaffirm the frailty yet wonder of human life.

Let's "walk the talk" together. Take time this summer for some more recovery and rebalancing.

Wing's top enlisted leader discusses the benefits of advanced education

By Chief Master Sgt. Amos Moore
908th AW Command Chief

I entered the Air Force in February of 1967. I served four years on active duty, returned to civilian life and after a 17-year break in service entered the Air Force Reserve in 1988.

Our Air Force today is not the same Air Force it was when I joined initially or when I came into the reserve program. The challenges we face today and are certain to face in the future demand that we continue to improve. As we streamline our organizations and transform our processes we must also improve the capabilities of our people.

In the leaner, smaller, more expeditionary Air Force we now find ourselves in, it is important that our Airmen possess the competency and knowledge to accomplish our mission and our managers and senior NCOs are as prepared to provide competent leadership.

The best way to develop that kind of knowledge and technical expertise is through advanced education.

The enlisted educational process is a combination of career development courses, professional military education courses, and technical competency courses. Let me outline those PME courses and the benefits of each.

Airman Leadership School (ALS or Course 1) enhances the development of senior Airmen by strengthening

their ability to lead, follow, and manage while they gain a broader understanding of the military profession. ALS prepares Airmen for the first level of supervision in a military environment and instructs them how to rate and provide feedback to subordinates and individuals they train.

Noncommissioned Officer Academy (NCOA or Course 9) prepares NCOs for positions of increased responsibility, broadening their leadership and supervisory skills and further enhancing their perspective of the profession of arms. NCOA is also offered via correspondence or in residence.

Noncommissioned Officer Leadership Development Program (NCOLDP) is a 10-day Air Force Reserve Command-specific course administered in two phases. NCOLDP combines college level academic management and leadership instruction. Students earn two college credits toward their **Community College of the Air Force** degree. They receive instruction on the management process, leadership, military heritage, communication skills, principles of counseling, time management, stress in the workplace, and effective writing by a college professor.

This is followed by four days of military practical, experiential, hands-on application of case studies and role playing presented by military facilitators to show

them how to apply these principles in a military setting. This course targets staff and technical sergeants.

Senior Noncommissioned Officer Academy (SNCOA) (Course 12 or Course 14) is an advanced professional military education program for selected senior NCOs to better prepare them for their leadership responsibilities by expanding their leadership and managerial capabilities and their perspective of the military profession. The curriculum, designed to meet senior NCO needs, consists of lectures and small group work seminars. This course is also offered via correspondence or in residence.

Senior Noncommissioned Officer Leadership Course (SNCOLC) is a two-day AFRC-specific course offered to grades E-7 to E-9. It focuses on team building, leadership, and trust to heighten awareness of the dynamics of supervision with emphasis placed on management theories, communication skills, and stress.

Chief Leadership Course (CLC) is a 10-day in residence course offered at the SNCO Academy that places emphasis on leadership in an expeditionary environment and the importance of establishing a network of communication among senior leaders across services.

The **AFRC Chief Master Sergeant Orientation Course** and the **AFRC Command Chief Course** are two new courses slated for startup

during FY 07; dates and schedules have not been published.

CCAF degrees are associate degrees in applied sciences in the member's respective AF specialty. Dynamic communications and war fighting technologies demand critical thinking, teamwork and commitment by Air Force personnel.

CCAF helps Airmen meet these demands and achieve personal goals by realizing their educational potential. CCAF degrees are directly related to Air Force Specialty Codes and are designed to improve the technical knowledge and sharpen the leadership and management capabilities of the enlisted corps, thus enhancing their readiness.

A CCAF degree in your related military career field earned in 2003 holds more weight than a bachelor's degree in basket weaving earned in 1989 and a master's degree in retail management earned in 1995, in other words what have you done for me lately (hint, hint).

As you can see, the Air Force and the Air Force Reserve consider continuing education a vital part of enlisted development. Statistics show that the Air Force Reserve has more enlisted members with four-year and higher degrees than any other branch of service.

Today's Airman enters the military with more education and technical skills now than

at any other time in our history. Supervisors, managers, and leaders must be on par with them.

Education must be the foundation upon which we build the next generation of Airmen. I encourage you to make education a priority all through your career in order to be prepared to assume roles of greater responsibility and positions of higher rank.

If you have completed your four-year degree, I encourage you to stop by the wing training office and find out what you need to do to get credit toward your CCAF degree.

Similarly, enroll in CCAF and update your records every time you complete a class. It is important to show progress in self improvement throughout your career.

Because of the way we now deploy, fulfill our AEF rotations and the joint environment we serve, it is imperative that you attend as many in residence courses as your civilian employment and family circumstances will allow. Take advantage of the opportunity to train with our active duty counterparts, as you no doubt will work with and supervise them.

As your Command Chief, I can tell you there is room at the top but, only for those who have prepared themselves. I commit myself to assist you in any way I can to ensure our Air Force Reservists continue to be a part of our Air Force of the future.

908th's newest chaplain shares words of wisdom, background

This July as our nation celebrates another birthday it is worthwhile to sit back and reflect upon our heritage. One of the things that has characterized our country from its founding has been the religious commitment of its inhabitants. Many of our original colonies were

founded by people looking for freedom to practice their religious faith.

Whether you think of the Pilgrims at Plymouth Rock, the Puritans of Massachusetts, the Baptists in Rhode Island, the Quakers of Pennsylvania, the Catholics of Maryland, or the Episcopalians in Virginia, America has been populated by people who take their religion seriously.

But unlike other parts of the world, the history of America's faith includes an idea that has enabled these various groups to live in relative peace.

That idea is the belief that true faith should not, indeed, it cannot be coerced. Each man is allowed to choose his own religious beliefs, and then allowed to freely

practice his faith, as long as it does not infringe upon the rights of others or the natural moral law which is the basis of our society.

Freedom to worship and freedom from coercive worship is guaranteed to Americans in our Constitution as the first basic right listed in Article 1 of the Bill of Rights. "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." This is part of our fundamental law, and the consistent application of it to all religions, encourages people of all faiths, or no faith, to live side by side in respectful tolerance.

As the newest chaplain of the 908th, one of my responsibilities is to ensure

that everyone is able to freely practice his or her faith. Another of my purposes is to support you spiritually as you serve our country. General George Washington recognized the need of spiritual strength for soldiers, and on 9 July 1776 he ordered the commanding colonels of the various regiments to procure chaplains. In this order he wrote, "The blessing and protection of Heaven are at all times necessary but especially so in times of public distress and danger."

Let me give you just a brief background of your newest chaplain. I have served in churches and pastoral ministry for 20 years, 11 of them around Detroit, and nine here locally in Prattville. My wife, Marcia, is a

registered nurse, and we have 2 girls and 3 boys between the ages of 19 and 11. I grew up in Indiana, the oldest of 5 children, and my father was an active duty physician in the Air Force for 2 years during the Vietnam War. Raising 5 children I don't have any time for personal hobbies, but I love to read and talk about technology, geo-political strategy, politics, sports, current events, medicine, and the stock market.

As a minister, I am always on call to support you during difficult times. My cell phone number is (334) 322-3876. Be assured of my prayers and support for each of you, that "the blessing and protection of Heaven" be upon you as you go about your mission.



By Chaplain (Capt.) David Dersch
908th AW Chaplain

Unit member rescues historic home from uncertain future, sees a gem where others might not

By Jeff Melvin
908th AW Public Affairs

Six months ago, after nearly two years of negotiations and virtually courting the owner and his family, Maj. Craig Drescher purchased a house that was literally falling down. And he's still so happy about it he can hardly contain himself. So, is the C-130 navigator crazy like a fox or just plain crazy? The answer, like most things in life, lies somewhere in the middle.

Two and a half years ago, Drescher, a former Navy aviator turned Navy recruiter was living in Birmingham. Wanting to be closer to his son who lived in Auburn with his ex-wife, he applied for a position with the 357th Airlift Squadron. Luckily for him the 908th was about to embark on its two-year activation supporting Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom and he not only got a job but he also got a chance to return to flying and continue to serve in the military.

He couldn't have asked for a better deal. So with a full-time job secured, he started thinking about moving to Montgomery. He started house hunting. And his luck got even better.

"I was driving around and I saw this old house. I thought it was vacant. I just stumbled onto it, literally," Drescher said, adding that he's always had a soft spot for old homes.

"Luckily, it was winter time and a lot of the vegetation had dropped their leaves. I could barely make out that there was a house back there. I pulled up and started poking around. I was taken in by it. I said to myself, 'This place really used to be something.' When I saw it, it was completely taken over by nothing short of a jungle – you couldn't see parts of the house because of the overgrowth.

The source of his fancy, or fantasy if you think he's crazy, is Winter Place, built in 1855 by Col. Joseph Samual Winter and his wife, Mary Elizabeth Winter. One of the country's leading architects of the time, Samuel Sloan of Philadelphia, designed Colonel Winter's first home and it is believed that Sloan, designer of the governor's mansion in Raleigh, N.C.,

designed Winter Place as well. Winter Place is two conjoined homes situated on 3.5 acres. An 1880 census shows the Winter family living in the North House and their daughter, Sally Gindrat Winter Thorington living in the South House with her husband, Robert D. Thorington and family. The South House has been in the Thorington family ever since. The North House was out of the Winter family from 1946-1951 but has been in the Thorington family ever since.

Once one of Montgomery's grandest homes, Winter Place, located in the Cottage Hill District just a few blocks away from the heart of downtown, is long removed from its glory days. The fall 2004 issue of the Alabama Heritage quarterly history magazine listed the structure as one of the state's endangered historic landmarks.

If Major Drescher realizes his dreams, it may not return to show place status but it'll certainly be a place one would be proud to call home. It's a formidable undertaking. He estimates repair and renovation costs reaching \$500,000 on the low end and possibly soaring to \$1 million if his pockets were deeper.

"The purchase was anything but a simple real estate transaction. We have a rehab agreement with a 10-year plan and the Alabama Historical Commission is the third party overseer. Luckily, my vision, the family's vision and the AHC's vision are all lined up," said the major, describing the complicated process that resulted in his acquisition of the historic property.

The purchase also includes a life estate agreement allowing present occupant, 82-year-old Joseph Winter Thorington Jr., to live here as long as he desires.

The lengthy process had a potentially unpleasant outcome – the North House deteriorated to such an extent that it may be unsalvageable.

Winter Place isn't merely an old home; it's a historically significant one. Listed in the Alabama Registry of Landmarks and Heritage since September 2005, Winter Place was added to the National Register of

Historic Places in mid-June 2006.

National Historic Landmarks are sites and structures considered to be of nationwide importance. This program is administered by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior with participation by the Alabama Historical Commission.

His fascination with old houses is deep seated, lasting as long as he can remember. He never dreamed he'd be in the situation he's in now, however.

"I kinda got this big package deal -- architectural significance and historical significance. This house has history from Civil War to civil rights. This house is part of our history and our fabric. And there's something in our culture that says, 'We should preserve that.'"

He adds that the house is in a troubled neighborhood and that his purchase/project is "but one small log in a large effort to improve this neighborhood.

That effort, he said, is supported by people like himself, current residents who want to improve where they live, people like his neighbor who founded a non-profit community outreach organization, the Jubilee Center, and the City of Montgomery's Weed and Seed program.

He also got help from an unexpected source, the son of a 357th AS co-worker. For his Eagle Scout project, Lt. Col. Marcus Puccini's son, Marcus II, arranged and oversaw the clearing of a 150-year-old, 300-foot wall on the property that had practically disappeared from view, overtaken by unchecked overgrown vegetation. Puccini enlisted the help of 30 other Scouts and completed the project in a day.

When Major Drescher talks about Winter Place, he often says 'we' although he's the sole owner.

That's because he has 'informal' partners. These partners "don't have funding for the project but they lend moral support and expertise."

Among those partners are people like Robert Gamble and Melanie Betz of the Alabama Historic Commission. Gamble, AHC's senior



South House Winter Place circa August 2004.

architectural historian, played a major role, telling Drescher all about the house, introducing him to the owner and assisting in the negotiations to acquire the property.

Gamble called Drescher a 'savior' and said he "displayed a tenacious and genuine interest in Winter Place," persevering through circumstances that would have tried the patience of most people. He added that he and others with keen interest in the property feared that all was lost until the major came along.

"He's got a lot of work to do but we're really excited. He's a hero in our eyes," Gamble continued.

Betz, who wrote the Alabama Heritage magazine article highlighting the plight of the historic home, also prepared the application requesting its placement on the National Register.

And then there's the mayor's office and Landmarks Foundation, the organization that runs Old Alabama Town. Their help has proved invaluable because contrary to popular opinion there's little funding available for renovation of historic properties, especially

by private owners.

It's his home but he doesn't intend to wall himself off, the major said.

"I don't want to build walls or fences around the project and say, 'This is all mine and you can't come in and look at it.' Part of my vision for the project is to have it somewhat accessible to the public. Now, I'm going to live here, so I'm not going to have it open all the time, but I don't intend to close it off."

So is Drescher crazy like a fox or just plain crazy? Did he stumble on a gold mine or a money pit? That depends on your point of view. If the C-130 navigator has any doubts, they're hard to find. He's all smiles these days.

"I'm 55 miles away from my son, four miles away from a great work opportunity with the 357th Airlift Squadron and I got this house. Things just lined up; I couldn't have envisioned this," he beamed.

If you run into Major Drescher, ask him about his project. Chances are he'll invite you over for a walk around.

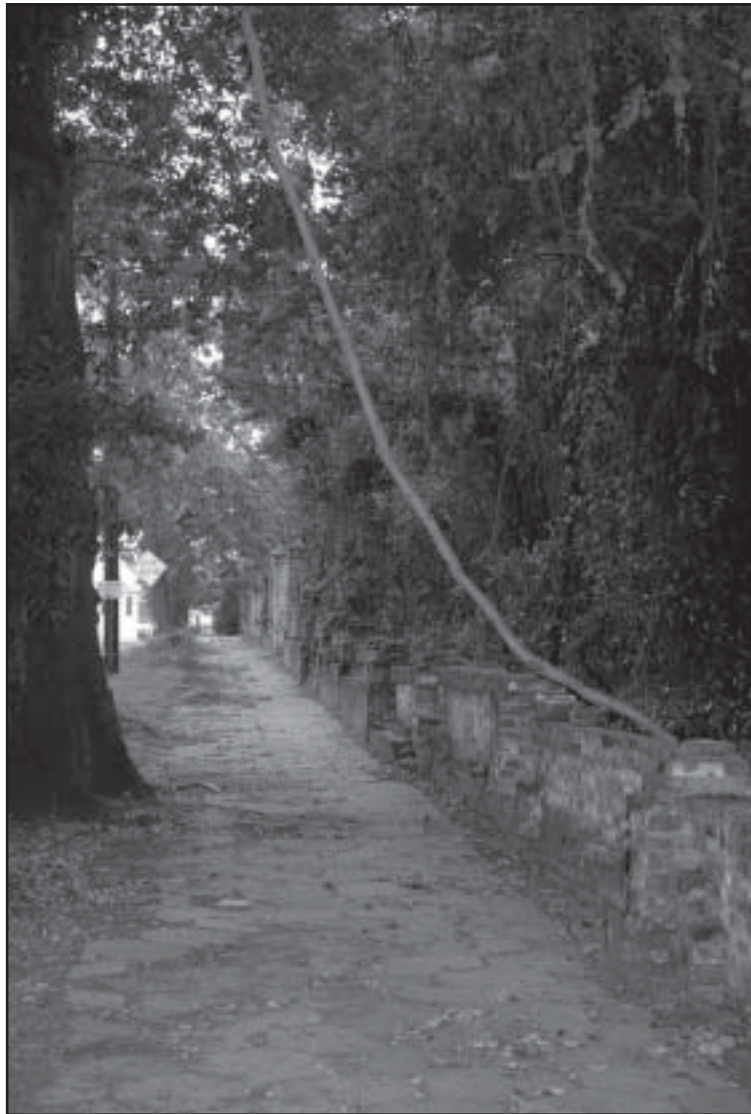


Already recognized by Winter Place was ad

e South



Photo by Maj. Craig Drescher



Thanks to Eagle Scout Marcus Puccini II Winter Place's 150-year-old 300-foot wall is visible again



Drescher shows off an interior room



Already recognized by the city and state as a historic building, last month Winter Place was added to the National Register.



Winter Place late-June 2006

Photos by Jeff Melvin



Summer means softball

Above, 908th AW outfielder Fred Boyd swings at a pitch during a 21-1 intramural softball loss against the division-leading undefeated HQ 754th ELSG No. 2 Jun 19. Left, 908th third baseman Mike Eubanks makes a throw to first while shortstop Mark



Photos by Jeff Melvin

Naglic, center, and pitcher Mark Williams, look on. Fans get a chance to show their support July 10 at 7 p.m. at Maxwell Field No. 6 in the squad's last game before the playoffs start July 19. The 908th squad is the middle of the pack of a 15-team league.

DOD wants to assess Guard/Reserve lifestyles

The Defense Department has hired a contractor, RTI International of Raleigh, N.C., to conduct a special health assessment survey during July and August, said Maj. Kirsten James, 908th Mission Support Group executive officer.

All Reserve and Guard units in the Montgomery metro area (as will other selected units in different geographic regions) will be required to attend a briefing concerning this Lifestyle Assessment Program, the major added.

"DOD is trying to gain a better understanding of health and lifestyle issues and/or additional needs of the Reserve/Guard component. They have been conducting Lifestyle Assessments for the active duty component since 1982 and are now looking into the common and special needs of the Reserve/Guard," Major James said.

The data analysis will compare prevailing rates of health and lifestyle variables across all components. Defense officials plan to track health-related trends, identify high risk groups, and areas needing additional screening or intervention. Practicing healthy lifestyles provides for better equipped leaders and prolonged careers thus the need for a better understanding of the differences with the Reserve/Guard Component.

"This program will be conducted by RTI representatives for complete independence and confidentiality. We will handle it like the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response training, squadrons will bid for slots and each slot will then need to be filled with the goal of 100 percent attendance by the close of the last session," the major added.

Sessions are as follows:

Day	Time	Month	Location
Saturday	0900-1100	Jul and Aug 06	Bldg. 803, AIS Large Auditorium
	1230-1430	Jul and Aug 06	Bldg. 803, AIS Large Auditorium
	1430-1630	Jul and Aug 06	Bldg. 803, AIS Large Auditorium
Sunday	0800-1000	Jul and Aug 06	Bldg. 803, AIS Large Auditorium
	1000-1200	Jul and Aug 06	Bldg. 803, AIS Large Auditorium

"Each of you knows your schedule best, so help your supervisors and self identify for a session if you know you are available and/or have some down time. This program is being supported by our Wing and Group Commanders as well as AFRC, so please be sure to attend one of the above sessions," Major James said.

Don't forget about FEDS Heal Dental Exams

FEDS Heal Dental Examinations are being scheduled through the Unit Health Monitors for members who are Class 4 Dental. Examinations will be scheduled from noon to 8 p.m. Saturday, and 8 a.m. to noon Sunday of the UTA in Bldg. 711. Focus for the July UTA dental exams are the Maintenance

Group and ASTS, but others may be scheduled through the Unit Health Monitors who will coordinate with ASTS.

The purpose of these examinations is to remove members from Class 4 dental status, so that members are not put in a no pay no points status.

Alumni reunion dinner set for Sept.

All past and present unit members are invited to the 908th AW Alumni Association Reunion Sept. 9 at 6:30 p.m. at the Falcon's Nest on Maxwell AFB-Gunter Annex.

The meal will be buffet style and includes sliced roast beef, grilled chicken breast, crispy catfish, salad and various vegetables, desserts and tea or coffee.

Noting that people are the key to a successful reunion, Alumni Association committee member Gene Beasley, "Last year's reunion was successful because of everyone there, whether it was their first time or whether they'd attended many before. We hope everyone returns and enjoys each others company. Even though we try to reach everyone, we miss some. If you know any current or former member who hasn't received a letter about the reunion, please give him or her a copy or pass his or her address on to me."

Beasley added that those unable to attend should still respond back so they can remain on the alumni association mailing list.

"If you would like to share photos you have of unit personnel or aircraft, please put your name on the back so we can return them to you. And, if you know of anyone who has passed away since our last dinner please let us know so we can recognize them at the dinner."

If you need further information, please contact Gene Beasley (334) 365-4721 or e-mail Beasley at: gb306@bellsouth.net (home) or work e-mail: gene.beasley.ctr@csd.disa.mil

Please complete and return ASAP:

Name: _____

E-MAIL: _____

Dinner: \$17 per person (includes tax and gratuity)

Number in Party: _____ Amount Enclosed: _____

Make check or money order payable to: **908th AW Reunion Alumni Association**

Send to: **Gene Beasley, 306 Woodvale Road, Prattville AL 36067,**
cell (334) 399 5198



Photo by Lt. Col. Jerry Lobb

Reservist earns Governor's Award

908th AMXS aircraft maintenance superintendent Senior Master Sgt. Leon Alexander and his wife, Kimberly, pose for a photo with Alabama Gov. Bob Riley and Air University Commander Lt. Gen. Stephen Lorenz during a luncheon May 17, honoring military members selected by the state as their respective services' outstanding representative.



Photo by Jeff Melvin

New DO on board

Maj. James Dignan is the new director of operations for 908th Operations Group's 357th Airlift Squadron. The major comes to the 908th from Keesler AFB, Miss, where he was most recently DO for the 403rd Operations Support Flight. He has 17 years service, including six years active duty in the Navy. The major has more than 6,300 flying hours, including 4,000 in E, H and J model C-130s. In addition to Keesler, he's had assignments at Willow Grove AFS, Pa., and Portland IAP, Ore.



Photo by Master Sgt. Scott Wagers

Chief zeros in on AF priorities

Chief Master Sgt. Rodney J. McKinley assumed his new post as the Air Force's 15th top enlisted leader July 1. Chief McKinley, former command chief master sergeant for Pacific Air Forces, said his new job brings with it a great responsibility to the service's enlisted force. As such, he's not planning to make immediate changes. Instead, he said, he will be busy helping Air Force leaders achieve three top priorities -- No. 1: Winning the war on terrorism; No. 2: Taking care of our Airmen; and No. 3: Recapitalizing our Air Force.

Congratulations to the following people:

Promotions
....to Master Sgt.
Donald Corkrum, MXG
....to Staff Sgt.
Kenyse Savage, MXG

Did you know?

There have been some recent reported cases of mononucleosis among Reservists worldwide. Have you ever been bitten by this virus?

This is one of the most common human viruses. Most people become infected sometime during their lives. In the US, as many as 95 percent of adults between 35 and 40 years of age have been infected.

Symptoms are fever, sore throat, and swollen lymph glands. Sometimes, a swollen spleen or liver may develop. Transmission involves intimate contact with the saliva of an infected person. The incubation period, or time from infection to appearance of symptoms is 4-6 weeks. No special precautions are recommended since the virus is also found frequently in the saliva of healthy people. Transmission of the virus is almost impossible to prevent.

Lab testing showing an elevated white blood cell count of certain atypical white blood cells will diagnose the virus. There is no specific treatment other than treating the symptoms. The illness rarely persists for more than four months. Do not hesitate to notify your provider or physician if you think you may be infected with this bug.

Please contact 908th ASTS Capt. Allan Hinton, wing infection control officer, at (334) 953-5404, if you have questions or comments.

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To the Family of: