

Southern Flyer

908th Airlift Wing (Air Force Reserve Command),
Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala., Vol. 44, Issue 5, May 2007



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polish wartime skills

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Photo by Jeff Melvin

908th Aeromedical Staging Squadron personnel simulate transporting a contingency aeromedical staging facility patient to an ambulance. See story and more photos on Page 7.

Southern Flyer

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

Editorial Staff

Chief, Public Affairs
Lt. Col. Jerry W. Lobb

Deputy Chief/Editor
Jeffery Melvin

Public Affairs Specialists
Staff Sgt. Jay Ponder
Senior Airman Christian Michael

Address

Editor, "Southern Flyer"
401 W. Maxwell Blvd.
Maxwell AFB, AL 36112

Phone Number

(334) 953-6804
or DSN 493-6804

Fax Number

(334) 953-2202
or DSN 493-2202

E-mail

908aw.pa@maxwell.af.mil

This funded Air Force Reserve Command newspaper is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. military services. Contents of the "Southern Flyer" are not necessarily the official views of or endorsed by the U.S. Government, Department of Defense or the Department of the Air Force.

Editorial policy

Editorial content of the "Southern Flyer" is edited, prepared and provided by the 908th Airlift Wing Public Affairs Office.

All photos are Air Force photos unless otherwise indicated.

We solicit articles, drawings and photographs and reserve the right to edit materials to conform to "Southern Flyer" editorial policies.

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.

Roll out red carpet, wow UCI team

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

About a month ago my wife received a letter from a cousin saying she and her family would be driving through Montgomery after spending spring break in Florida. They wrote that they'd like to stop and see us. They are a military family too and our paths have crossed many times over the past 20 years. In fact, they practically lived around the corner from us the last time we were stationed at Maxwell and would drop by and see us all the time. Sometimes the house was a wreck, others it was immaculate.

Despite our familiarity with them, my wife wanted to roll out the red carpet and make their first visit to our new Montgomery home special. We put together a "laundry list" of all the things that needed to be done around the house before they arrived.

Even though I had plenty of advanced warning, I didn't do a single thing on my list until the day before our cousins arrived. I enlisted my two little boys in my last-minute effort to accomplish the chores and started barking out one order after another. It wasn't long before Jake and Will were frustrated because I was providing them too much guidance.

Finally, I put the boys to bed and went into crisis management mode. I stayed up until the wee hours burning the midnight oil, but didn't really get much done—and it looked that way. When our cousins arrived, I was a zombie and found myself yawning

so much that they might have thought that I wasn't thrilled to have them here. Boy, I sure failed to execute the plan we put together to prepare for our cousin's visit despite repeatedly telling my wife I'd get it done.

This October we, as a wing, are going to have a family member return for a visit and I think we'd all like to roll out the red carpet. A former wing commander, Col. Jimmy Stewart, the AFRC Inspector General, will be leading the team conducting our unit compliance inspection, or UCI.

The UCI will be looking at our management processes and how we complete and document our work. Just like the "laundry list" I put together for my cousin's visit, we know what we have to do, or what the IG team is coming to see and the questions they are going to ask. Yep, we already know most everything they are going to look at and honestly, we should be able to host the IG any day, not just when they have scheduled their visit.

I think many of the things the IG is going to look at are in good shape. We need to quickly validate that and keep it up. However, there are probably some other things that need attention. The responsibility for preparing for the UCI doesn't fall on the shoulders of just a few. We all have a part, as the saying goes, of "dotting the I's and crossing the T's" to get ready for it.

Last month, and again this month, I asked our performance planning office to



Col. Michael J. Underkofler

put together "laundry lists" of things that all of us need to do to prepare for the UCI. Go through these and any others provided by your supervisor. Document the training and inspections you do. Correct deficiencies or identify shortfalls. If you're not getting the help you need, speak up. Your commanders and I trust your technical competence, experience, and attention to detail. Tell us what we need to do to help your shop or section shine for the IG.

I learned many good things from Colonel Stewart when he was here in the 908th AW. Probably because he is part of our family, I'd really like to roll out the red carpet and "wow" him and his inspection team. He knows we know how to train and deploy combat-ready Airmen, let's show him we know how to do the paperwork too.

Wouldn't it be nice that instead of worrying if the inspection team is going to see the dirty dishes under the sink, we pick their brains with ideas as to how we can make our processes, shops, or sections even better? Burn the midnight oil now to ensure you're not yawning in October.

Spirituality can increase self-esteem

By Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Phillip Armstrong
908th AW chaplain

Spirituality, for many folks, is a deeply personal matter usually defined

by (a) personal experience with God and/or religious people (b) individual beliefs, and (c) denominational religious teachings. One of the goals of our 908th Chaplain Service team is to help you ex-

plore your faith and focus on the proven benefits of being spiritually healthy.

For many, spiritual health begins in their inner being (sometimes referred to as soul or spirit). In their soul,

: Spirituality

they have a solid, deep, core belief that they are loved by God. This belief - that God loves them - becomes the center of their self-definition. This faith in the love God has for them become an anchor in the storms of life; an unshakable truth in the sea of religious claims and counter-claims.

Even when our world seems to be coming apart, even if - may God forbid - the one who promised till death do us part says, "I don't love you anymore;" even then God's love can strengthen and carry us through raging pain and indescribable loss.

Most people want to

receive love, give love, be accepted, valued, and befriended. To be loved - with warts and all exposed - is one of our basic human needs. Wouldn't it be great to be highly thought of by peers even on our worst days and be loved unconditionally? God knows everything about us, and loves us with an everlasting love. Many testify that for them God's love is so deep; it can forgive the most horrible mistake.

If we meditate on the fact we are loved by the most powerful being in the universe, our self-esteem will rise. If we believe we don't deserve such love, we will become humble. If we value ourselves the way God values us, we will

understand we are precious. We cannot fathom the depth of God's love for us, but belief in a higher power helps you understand the meaning and purpose of life; and offers you protection against despair, depression and hopelessness.

Independent, scientific research is proving spiritually well people have lower blood pressure, significantly lower anxiety and depression scores, lower heart attack risk factors, and stronger family relationships. Scientific research reveals spiritually healthy people deal better with crisis, have greater ego strength, cope with illness better, and have a greater ability to lessen feelings of fear, hopelessness, and isolation.

The research undeniably links an active spiritual life with personal happiness, social welfare, health, and longevity.

To begin or deepen your spiritual journey, set aside a regular quiet time for prayer, reflection or meditation. Begin to study religious/spiritual material. Engage in supportive friendships with others who share similar spiritual/religious goals. Attend religious or spiritual events that speak to your heart. To be wholly healthy one must be physically fit, emotional strong, socially engaged, and spiritually well. Increase your self-esteem, experience God's love for you, and be spiritually fit!

Lack of skill, not will, derails most fitness plans

By Maj. William J. "Joe" Friday
Commander, 908th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron

How much do you know about fitness? Are you prepared for the test each year or do you just gut it out? Do you feel good after you finish the test or do you feel like a C-130 just landed on you?

If you know the difference between aerobic and anaerobic fitness and you always score an excellent on the test and feel great afterwards, then press on to the next article because you probably already know what's in this one.

On the other hand, if you are like me and are still trying to achieve fitness excellence and learn a little more about how it works, then please read on.

I've taken the Air Force fitness test in some form or fashion for the last 16 years. Regardless of the test form, I never received a lot of information on exercise physiology or the proper steps to test preparation prior to taking the test. I've committed to numerous exercise plans where I gave a lot of effort but didn't see the results at test time. Some might say that

it was a lack of will on my part for not sticking to a program. However, I think it was more of a lack of skill because the program I was using didn't give good results. I think that most Airmen that have difficulty with fitness fall into this same category. Let me share some of my experiences with you to support this point.

I assume that most Airmen have the will to perform fitness without having to be threatened with adverse actions or limited advancement potential and that most Airmen know very little about exercise physiology. My assumptions are based on my experience at the USAF Officer Training School. During my first year and a half at OTS I was a flight training officer and tracked the fitness performance of my officer trainees through their five fitness tests. I personally commissioned 144 officers so I was able to see a range of people from many different backgrounds. My observation was that most trainees did very poorly on the first test and gradually improved over the course of the program through a combination of good physical fitness training and education. This steady

improvement was a very positive reinforcement for their efforts in fitness. The majority of students made significant improvements in their fitness by the end of the program, losing weight and improving their fitness stamina dramatically. My last two years at OTS were spent as the flight commander over the OTS fitness program and the fitness instructors. In this role I saw first-hand the training provided through classroom lectures and field demonstration on proper exercise and nutrition. My take-away from that experience was that Airmen want to improve (will) and will improve when they are given the proper information (skill) and see positive benefits from their efforts.

So how does this affect you? Well, while I did stay at a Holiday Inn Express last night, I am not an exercise physiologist. I am however a communicator and want you to know what resources are out there to help develop your fitness skill. The first resource I want to

mention is the Healthy Living Program for Reservists slide show that you can find on the AF Portal under the Air Force Fitness Management site. For good fitness information on a proper fitness plan review Module 2 of the program and for proper nutrition and hydration information review Module 3 of the program. Second, you can also find information at the AFRC SG website (<https://www.mil.afrc.af.mil/hq/sg/fitnessprogram/physicalfitness.htm>).

If you are ready to make the test easier and achieve an excellent without feeling terrible please take the time and develop your fitness skill. After you have the skill to train for the test the rest (will) is up to you. Good luck and see you on the track.



UCI UTA “To Do” List!

By Lt. Col. Troy Vonada
Chief, Performance Planning

Legendary Notre Dame football coach Knute Rockne led the 1920s “Fighting Irish” to 105 wins, 12 losses and 5 ties in 13 seasons, a remarkable .881 winning percentage – the highest in college football history. Known for his humorous, colorful personality, he captured the public’s imagination during what was termed the “Golden Age” of American sports.

“An automobile goes nowhere efficiently unless it has a quick, hot spark to ignite things, to set the cogs of the machine in motion. So I try to make every player on my team feel he’s the spark keeping our machine in motion. On him depends our success,” Rockne once said.

Each member of the 908th Airlift Wing team is critical to a successful unit compliance inspection. As in football, where missing a blocking assignment may mean a failed offensive play or losing the game, we can’t afford to miss an assignment either in UCI preparation. The team depends on you. If you do your part we can win the UCI and show AFRC once again we’re an unbeatable team. For this UTA, please accomplish the following:

- Run your UCI checklists (Due CCX: June 30)
- Complete the “Common Core” checklist prepared by CCX as UCI-e-Gram #011
- Complete review of Manager’s Internal Control Program (MICP)
- Review and/or close any “Open” findings from the 22nd Air Force Staff Assistance Visit (focus on closing SAV items before the UCI)
- Review and/or close any “Open” items in Self Inspection Tracking System (SITS) and consider Corrective Action Plans
- If an Operations Group member, prepare yourself mentally and physically for the aircrew standardization assistance visit/aircrew standardization evaluation (ASAV/ASEV).
- If involved in organizing/working Clergy Day, Civic Leader Tour or Family Day, get with PA or your first sergeant to help out
- Bring Air Force physical training gear for the wing-wide run (Sunday, 6:45 a.m.)
- If a supervisor, annotate OJT records appropriately (see training office if you have questions)
- If a mentor, conduct your mentoring and document (see personnel flight if questions)
- Everyone—pull out your gas masks, inspect them and annotate DD Form 1574 (yellow card inside gas mask carrier)
- If you need a family member care plan, see your first sergeant or friendly MPF

Lastly, consider pulling annual tour at home station to prepare for the UCI. Don’t make your supervisor ask. Volunteer to do whatever it takes to get your unit ready for the UCI, the most significant event to take place in our wing this year. As a team, “Let’s win one for the Gipper” (another Knute Rockne quote)!

The healthy Airman.....knows her numbers

By Lt. Col. Carol Anders
908th Aeromedical Staging Squadron

May is a time to remember mothers. Women across the country will celebrate Mother's Day with flowers and brunch. Mother's Day kicks off National Women's Health Week, during which the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and other organizations nationwide encourage all women to "Reconnect to Your Health". 25 percent of the members of the 908th are female and need to be healthy Airmen by reconnecting with their health and knowing their numbers.

Women need to overcome the barriers that have prevented them from visiting a health care professional. It is time to know your numbers for bone density, cholesterol, blood sugars, when to have those mammograms on a yearly basis, and the need for yearly pap smears. If you are of childbearing age, you need to understand the need for a proper diet, especially the intake of folic acid beginning with preconception planning. Older women need to understand menopause (change of life) and hormone therapy. Visiting a health care professional once a year is just one of the five keys to healthy living that the Office on Women's Health promotes during the National Women's Health Week. The others are: eating well, exercising, not smok-

ing, and following basic safety rules.

Bone density can be measured to determine an individual's degree of osteoporosis and subsequent risk for fractures. It is a simple non-invasive procedure. If density is found to be low, treatment is oral medications.

Mammography uses special X-ray images to detect abnormal growths or changes in the breast tissue. Mammograms performed on healthy, normal breasts provide a baseline reference for later comparison. This set of images is called a mammogram. Mammography is your best defense against breast cancer because it can detect the disease in its early stages, before it can be felt during a breast examination. Research has clearly shown that mammography can increase breast cancer survival. Your risk of breast cancer increases as you age, so a yearly mammogram is especially important if you are over age 40. If you think you need a mammogram, don't wait for your yearly physical. Contact your health-care provider right away. Not all breast cancers can be detected on mammogram,

especially in younger women who have denser breast tissue. Remember, along with following your doctor's recommendations for mammography testing, it is essential that you perform breast self-examination every month, beginning at age 20. You should also have breast examinations by your health-care provider (physician or nurse) every three years starting at age 20 and every year starting at age 40.

Pregnancy: The military wants to take care of their pregnant females. It developed the fetal protection program to help monitor you during your pregnancy. You may now do duty up until your due date with certain restrictions. Contact the physical exam people in Building 711 as soon as you know you are pregnant. Besides the fetal protection program, all females being deployed who are of child bearing age need to make sure they are not pregnant at the time of deployment.

Menopause: Most of today's women will live 25-30 years—one third of their lives—after menopause. An understanding of the body's changes during this phase of life can ease the transition and equally important, better prepare you to safeguard your health during your later years. There are many different considerations a woman needs to take as she approaches menopause. Specific treatment for menopausal symptoms will be determined by your health care professional based on your age, overall health, medical history, current symptoms, tolerance to specific medications, procedures or therapies and of course your opinion and preference.

There are wonderful web sites on women's health. Just search under the topic that interests you most.

Next month in honor of Father's Day, we will take a look at the numbers men need to be aware of to stay healthy.



Photos by Staff Sgt. Jay Ponder

Wing conducts holocaust commemoration ceremony
Shimon Smith, an Israeli Shaliach (emissary), left, and 908th AW Chaplain (Capt.) David Dersch, right, lead a ceremony commemorating the six million Jewish Holocaust victims. The memorial was held on Sunday of the April UTA. Smith sang songs in Hebrew and English. 908th Airlift Wing Commander Col. Michael Underkofler said having the ceremony at the Blue Thunder camp in one of the large canvas tents made the events that

took place more than 60 years ago feel more realistic. 908th AW members participated in the memorial by lighting and holding the six candles and reading some of the names of children who died in the holocaust. Colonel Underkofler presented a wing coin to Smith who also happens to be a reserve captain in the Israeli Defense Force.

Trio get shot to earn navigator wings

Jeffery Melvin
908th AW Public Affairs

Three wing members are among the candidates selected by the 07-01 Officer Training School/Undergraduate Flying Training selection board that convened March 22 at Headquarters Air Force Reserve Command.

908th Services Flight's Capt. Samuel Manno and 908th Maintenance Squadron's Tech. Sgts. Timothy Dixon and Jamar Brooks were selected for navigator training. Sergeant Dixon is attending OTS; Sergeant Brooks heads to OTS in May. The trio will return to Maxwell upon completing navigator training and will be assigned to the 908th's 357th Airlift Squadron.

908th AW Commander Col. Michael J. Underkofler said he was extremely pleased with the board results not only because the unit needs navigators but also because the selections represent the realization of the Airmen's career advancement goals.

Other wing personnel looking for commissioning opportunities may want to follow the trio's path.

"The greatest commissioning opportunities in the near term are forecasted to be in pilot, navigator, and medical career fields," Colonel Underkofler said, noting that wing manning levels continue to remain at high levels, thus limiting Deserving Airmen Commissioning Program opportunities.

For Sergeant Brooks the selection represents attainment of two goals: a lifelong interest in aviation and career advancement. He thanked former 908th Command Chief Master Sgt. Amos Moore for "educating" him about advancement opportunities in the Air Force Reserve.

Shortly after graduating from Troy University in December 2005, Brooks, who's been in the 908th for five years, acted on advice he received from Chief Moore and began accomplishing the actions necessary to meet the eligibility requirements for board selection. Some

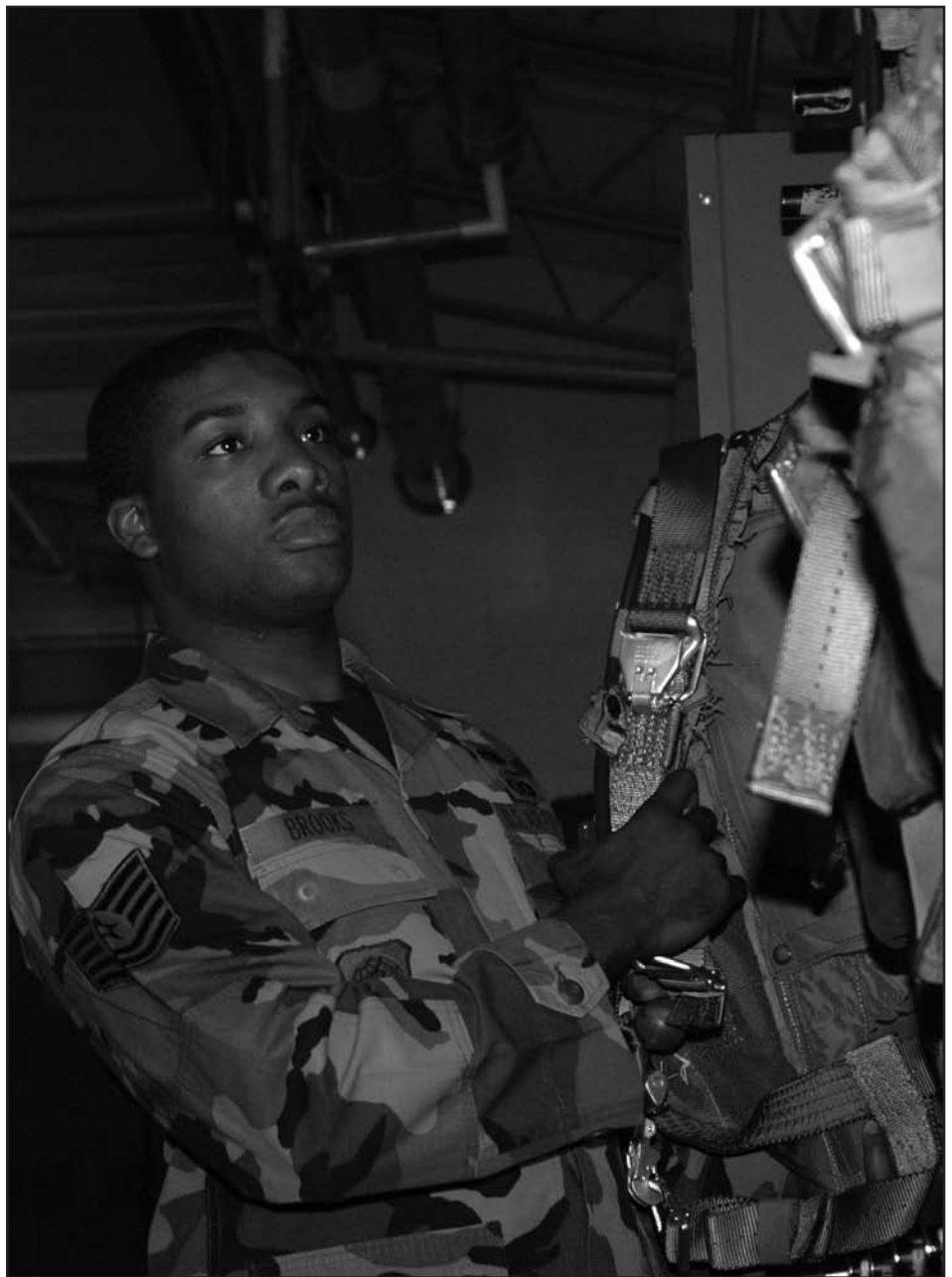


Photo by Jeff Melvin

OTS and navigator training selectee Tech. Sgt. Jamar Brooks inspects aircrew parachutes.

15 months later, he's a few hours short of earning a master's degree, about to earn a commission, and about to earn his navigator wings. He couldn't be happier.

"It'll be nice to come back as an officer to the same unit that I've been a part of all these years as an enlisted member," he said.

And he hasn't forgotten Chief Moore's mentoring.

"I hope that what I'm doing will serve as an inspiration to others," he said.

Anyone interested in following his lead should note the path to becoming a navigator isn't easy. Applicants must meet all requirements listed in AFI 36-2205 and AFRCI 36-2602. The

next HQ AFRC UFT board (to include application for air battle manager) convenes in September 2007. Applications are due not later than Aug. 29.

Questions about the selection board can be addressed to Master Sgt. Cynthia Freeman, HQ AFRC/A1BB, DSN 497-1235.

If you are interested in becoming a pilot or navigator for the 908th AW, please see Col. John Jones, commander, 908th Operations Group, or Maj. James Dignan, 357th AS, director of operations. Those interested in becoming a flight nurse should see Capt. John Jordan, 908th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron, chief, flight nurse operations.

Medical, support units sharpen wartime skills

Unit medical, services, communications and personnel specialists got a chance to practice their wartime skills before the threat of severe weather forced an early end to the field training exercise at the Blunder Thunder training complex April 14.

908th Aeromedical Staging Squadron personnel accomplished their primary objective of simulating operating a contingency aeromedical staging facility,

said Senior Master Sgt. Kimberly DeVore, 908th ASTS's NCOIC of mobility.

"The weather updates were very helpful. They allowed us to maximize training as well as be safe," Sergeant DeVore said.

The mobility NCOIC said they accomplished most of their objectives although the scheduled mass casualty exercise was cancelled. She said organizers received positive feedback from participants and observers.

A CASF is a 24-hour medical hold-

ing and staging facility. Medical practitioners staffing a CASF expedite the treatment of the wounded by assessing the nature of their injuries, providing first aid, and prioritizing the movement of patients to a medical facility based on their conditions. The contingency aeromedical staging facility portion of the field training exercise was held to help train and maintain proficiency of medical squadron members, so they will be ready to deploy if called.



Senior Airman Jessica Knizel controls facility access.

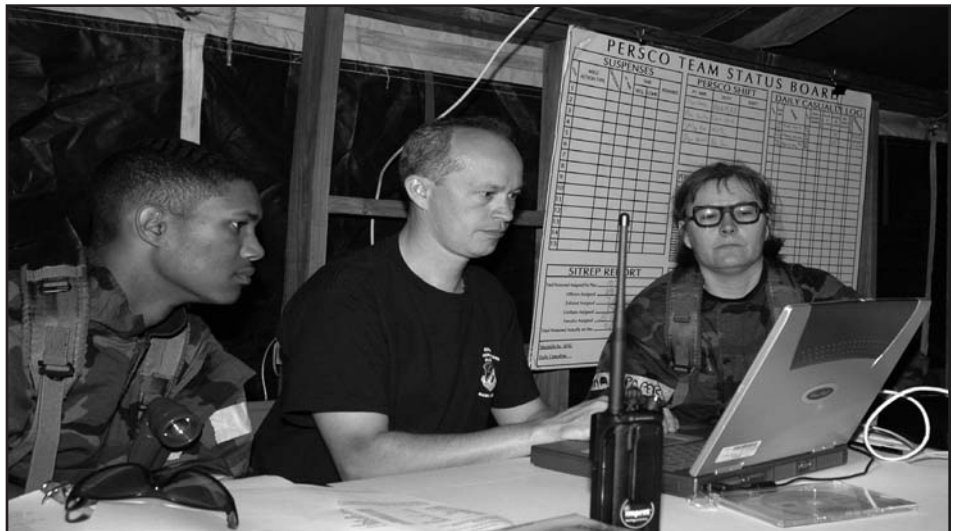


Photos by Jeff Melvin

ASTS members, Senior Airman Stephen DeGracia, front, and Tech. Sgt. Jeffery James, simulate transporting an injured patient to an awaiting ambulance.



908th Communications Flight Staff Sgts. Tamaria Hall, left, and Lisa Lawson practice 'buddy drinking' while in MOPP 4.



908th CF's Master Sgt. Gaston Cannon, center, lends some technical assistance to 908th MPF's Staff Sgt. Damian Howell, left, and Senior Master Sgt. Martha Roy. Sergeants Howell and Roy and other MPF members operated a Personnel Support for Contingency Operations, or PERSCO team during the exercise.

Family Day

Montgomery Zoo hosts 908th AW & 187th FW members

Family Day, set for Saturday, May 5, returns to Montgomery Zoo. This year's Family Day will be a joint event recognizing the 908th Airlift Wing and the 187th Fighter Wing – the Air National Guard unit based at the Montgomery Airport.

The event will officially start at noon with a commander's call hosted by 908th AW Commander Col. Michael Underkofler and 187th FW Commander Col. Jeffrey Smiley. A representative from Montgomery Mayor Bobby Bright's office will be on hand as well. Of course, the zoo itself will again be the main entertainment attraction for this year's Family Day. Other activities will include children's games, moonwalks, static display vehicles and more. Musical entertainment will come from the Capital Sounds, the concert band that wowed us at the 2005 Family Day event. We are looking forward to a great day of food,

fun and fellowship – and most of all, saying "Thank you" to our reservists, guardsmen and family members for the combined support of America's Air Force.

Here are some need-to-know details about Family 2007.

Rules of Engagement

- Have a great time with family, unit members
- Think safety always
- Dress appropriately, members may report in civilian attire unless scheduled for meeting and/or activities where uniform is appropriate
- Drive or carpool to zoo at the time designated for your unit
- This is a duty day until signed out
- Members are in duty status for entire day
- Make sure any/all injuries are identified to unit First Sgt.
- Bring only baby food as

lunch will be provided.

- Prohibited at the zoo: alcohol, balls, boom boxes, skates, profanity

Entry/Eating Procedures

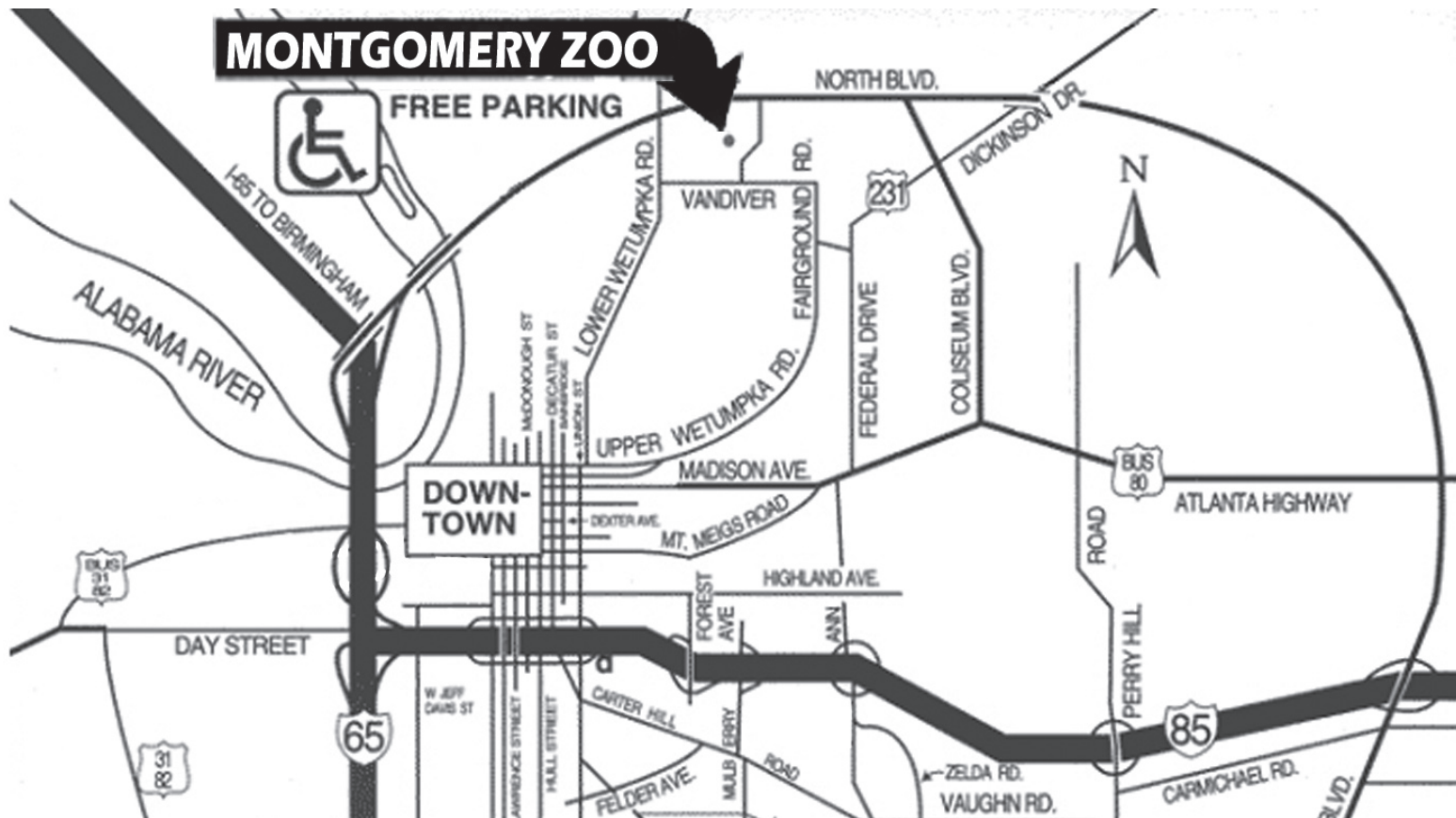
- There will be two entry gates and three parking areas for us. One of the ticket booths at the main gate will be marked for 908th AW and 187th FW members and families. Another entry point at the Mann Museum parking lot entrance will also be there for us.
- We will have members directing us to the parking areas. Please follow their direction to avoid congestion and parking lots that are already full.
- A colored arm band will be issued to each member and guest good for zoo entry as well as a ride on the zoo train. Meal tickets will also be issued. Both will be available by dis-

playing your military ID card at either of our two entry points.

- The meal ticket entitles the bearer to one beef hot dog OR hamburger, one bag chips, one bag animal cookies, and drink. Note: Once all personnel have been through the food line, individuals will be offered opportunity to return for seconds if available. Please be respectful of others to ensure all are fed first.

Zoo Parking and Access

- No bus rides to/from base – members will need to drive their own personal vehicles or carpool with others from the base. Exception will be a bus for the airlift personnel to/from hotel
- Unit members and their families can enter the zoo via two gates: (1) the main



Schedule of Events

10:45 – 11:30 **Phased**
Release as scheduled per com-
mander to travel to zoo
10:45 – noon Zoo/Mann Mu-
seum/Train Ride/Exhibits
11 – 11:45 **Band (set 1)**
Noon – 12:30 **Command-**
er's Call (mandatory attendance)
12:30 – 2 **Lunch**
12:30 – 2 **Band (set 2)**
12:30 – Closing **Zoo/Mann**
Museum/Train Ride/Exhibits
2:30 – 3:30 **Petting**
Zoo (in the stage area)
4 – 4:30 **Unit Sign out**

gate entrance from the Northern bypass or off Fairground Road to the main entrance or (2) Mann Museum gate off Vandiver Blvd
 • 908th AW and 187th FW members/families can park in the main parking lot near the zoo entrance and enter via the main entrance, or park in the Mann Museum parking lot or the Chisholm Elementary School parking lot and access the entrance at the rear of the Mann Museum.

ARRIVAL

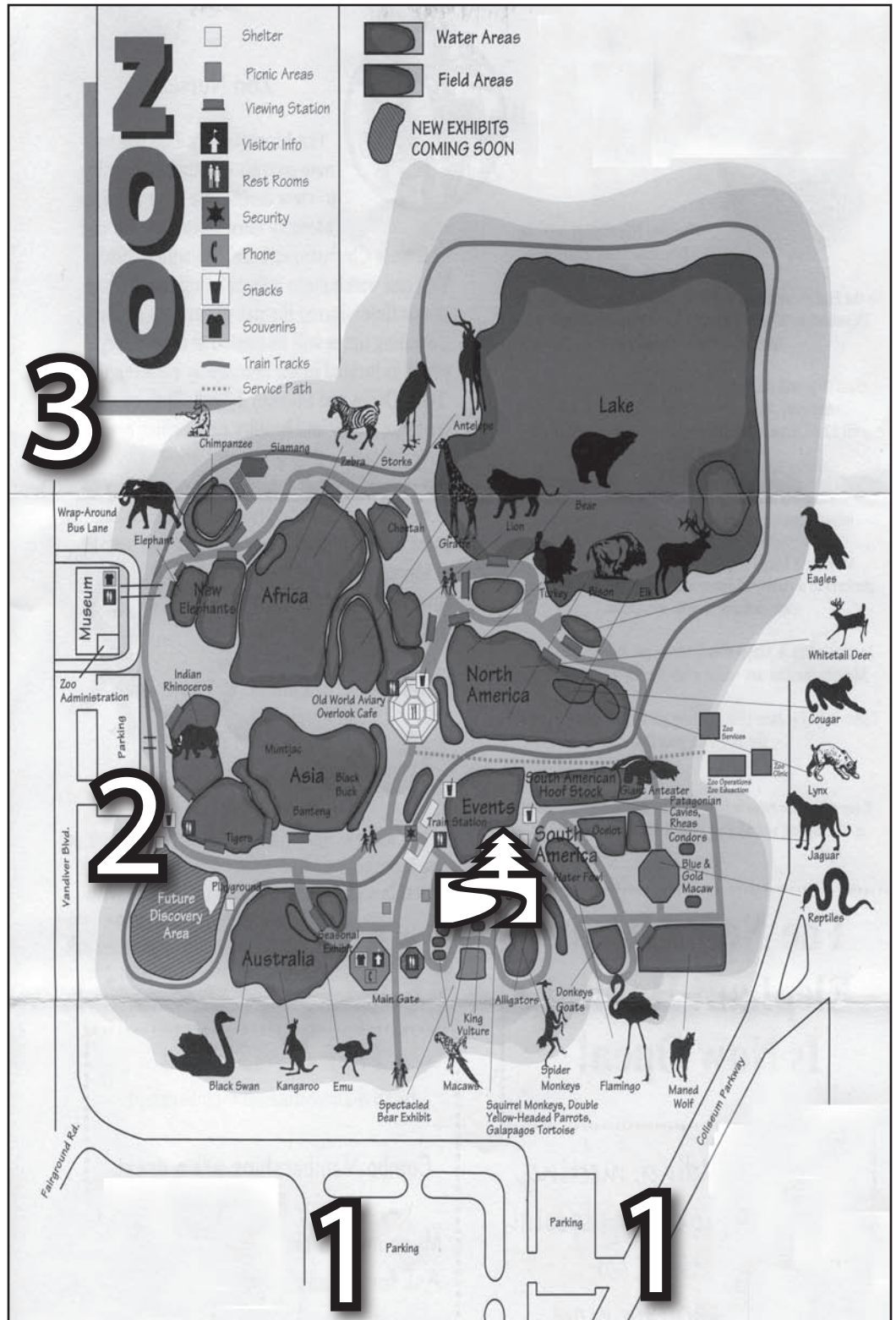
Activities will kick off at noon at the events area near the train shed just inside the main entrance (see symbol ctr of map).

PARKING

1. Zoo Main Entrance (off Coliseum Pkwy or Fairground Road)
2. Mann Museum (off Vandiver Blvd.)
3. Chisholm Elementary School (off Vandiver Blvd.)

// NOTE //

Do not park on any grassy area or any area not designated as a parking area.
An improperly parked vehicle may be towed at the owner's expense.



Things you can do Family Day week- end



The Museum of Fine Arts on the grounds of the Alabama Shakespeare Festival

Photos courtesy Montgomery Convention and Visitor Bureau

Are you wondering about things your guests or family can do Saturday night or Sunday? Here are a few ideas.

Why not visit Old Alabama Town, a history village consisting of 19th and 20th century homes. Old Alabama Town is located near downtown Montgomery just beyond the Montgomery Biscuits stadium. Old Alabama Town is closed on Sunday but many visitors say it's a thrill just to walk around. For more information, visit www.oldalabamatown.com.

Speaking of the Biscuits, they will be at home that weekend against Mississippi. Friday and Saturday games begin at 7:05 p.m., Sunday games start at 2. Saturday games will feature fireworks; Sunday is Kids Day. For more about Biscuits games, go to <http://biscuitsbaseball.com>.

There's also the Alabama Shakespeare Festival. ASF is one of the largest Shakespeare Festivals in the world. The theatre is surrounded by a large park where your families may walk and picnic if they wish.

Also on the ASF grounds is the Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts. Consider a free 1 p.m. "Weekends at One" docent-led tour on Saturday or Sunday. An audio guide, rented in the museum shop, lets you choose your own tour path through the permanent collection.

For history buffs, Martin Luther King Jr. was the pastor at the Dexter Avenue King Memorial Baptist Church in Montgomery. No tours on Sunday but visitors are welcome to attend the Sunday service.

Montgomery is also the site of one of the few state capitols designated as a National Historic Landmark. In 1861, Jefferson Davis was sworn in on the capitol grounds as the president of the Confederate States of America. A gold star now marks the spot where he stood.

Although the Civil Rights Memorial Center, 400 Washington Ave, is closed on Sundays, visitors can view the Wall of Tolerance Memorial anytime.

Montgomery is the birthplace of Nat King Cole and Hank Williams. The Hank Williams Museum, in downtown Montgomery across from the Civic Center is open until 6 p.m. Saturday and from 1-4 on Sunday.

Tour the home of one of America's most important writers, F. Scott Fitzgerald, at the F. Scott & Zelda Fitzgerald Museum, 919 Felder Avenue, 264-4222. Open Saturday and Sunday from 1-5 p.m.

Try to visit Union Station at 300

Water Street. A part of the Riverfront development Union Station has a Visitor's Center and Depot Gift Shop.

The Lightening Route Trolley departs every 20 minutes from Union Station "Train Shed." The trolley makes a circuit around downtown attractions and riders are treated to taped commentary explaining the history of many of the attractions.

Montgomery has many places to shop like the Shoppes at EastChase which consists of over 40 upscale specialty stores and restaurants.

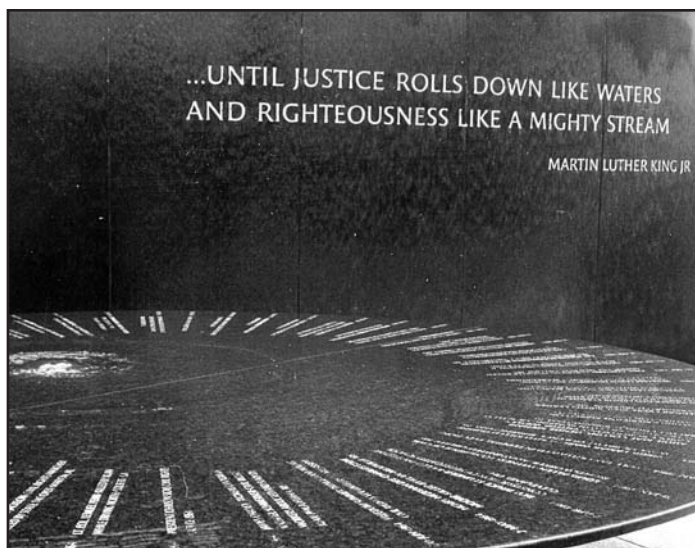
Eastdale Mall, 1000 Eastdale Road, off Atlanta Highway, 334-277-7380, has a Dillard's, Sears, J.C. Penney's and over 80 specialty shops and an eight-screen THX cinema complex. Eastdale Mall also has an atrium, courtyard cafes and an ice rink.

Or how about a movie, in addition to the cinema complex at Eastdale Mall, there are two other Montgomery theaters

– the Wynnsong 10, 3975 Eastern Blvd, 284-3770, and the Rave 16, 244-1300, intersection of Vaughn at Taylor Roads. And in Prattville, there's the Promenade 12, 2399 Cobbs Ford Road, 285-1818.

Not interested in a movie, what about Montgomery's W.A. Gayle Planetarium, 1010 Forest Avenue, 242-4797; public shows every Sunday at 2 p.m.

These are just a small example of things to do. Other options: check out area parks, walk along the river front, explore Prattville or Wetumpka. Want more ideas, visit the Montgomery Convention and Visitor Bureau's web site, www.visitingmontgomery.com or check out www.montgomeryadvertiser.com's Entertainment section.



The Civil Rights Memorial



Staff Sgt. Ricky Howard points out a feature on the M68 Optic Sight on the M4 to Staff Sgt. Jeffery Paul and Master Sgt. William Frost.



Senior Airman Wesley manipulates the ACOG (Advanced Combat Optical Group), an enhancement he has on his weapon because he is a designated marksman.



Tech. Sgt Mark Simmons prepares to fire.

Cops heat up range

Security forces light up firing range April 14 as unit members undergo semi-annual weapons qualifications.



Master Sgt. David McCaughtry, 908th SFS's NCOIC of combat arms demonstrates the over barricade firing position.



No ones escapes MOPP gear training.

Photos by Jeff Melvin



Navy workers load the assault boat onboard aircraft 85-0037.



Tight squeeze



Master Sgt. David Greer cops a squat.

Big drop, big day

Aircrew scores success on second boat drop

The 908th Airlift Wing completed a joint airborne/air transportability training mission, transporting a 33-foot U.S. Navy assault boat to the West Coast March 15. The JA/ATT program offers the military services an opportunity to develop tactics and procedures jointly and to increase proficiency in airdrop, assault landing and mobility operations.

"A similar mission in January 2003 was unsuccessful. The airdrop load malfunctioned and damaged the boat and the aircraft," said 357th AS senior loadmaster Chief Master Michael Harper, who was joint airdrop inspector on both missions.

The wing made the most of its second chance. Capt. Jeremy Angel and crew flew the mission and met all timelines.

"The drop was outstanding. I felt that I had to prove something to myself and get this one right. The drop was completed and executed without any problems. BIG DROP and BIG DAY for the 908th Airlift Wing as they completed another wartime training mission," said Chief Harper. (Info and photos provided by Chief Master Sgt. Michael Harper)



From left, pilot Capt. Jeremy Angel, co-pilot Maj. Robert David, flight engineer Senior Master Sgt. Brent Solomon, and loadmaster Senior Airman Josh Burton. Not pictured, navigator Lt. Col. Tom Ohland, loadmaster Master Sgt. David Greer, and crew chiefs Tech. Sgt. Gary Waldron and Senior Airman Jeff Harris.



Special boat crew members get ready to jump.

Courtesy photos

Personnel Flight team trains at Silver Flag

By Senior Master Sgt. Martha Roy
Superintendent, 908th MSF

Through the years there have been misconceptions about what the Military Personnel Flight does. Some wing members probably even think that the sole function of the MPF is to process paperwork. Well, they would be right if we were speaking in terms of the peacetime mission. However, during wartime our primary focus changes to force accountability of all personnel assigned to whatever location we may find ourselves when called upon to deploy. Personnel from our AFSC are chosen to be on the Personnel Support for Contingency Operations, or PERSCO, team.

One of the ways that the PERSCO team gets training is to go to SILVER FLAG at Tyndall AFB, Fla. SILVER FLAG is a week-long exercise primarily geared toward training civil engineer personnel to build up a bare base in a forward deployed location.

Along with civil engineers the exercise also gives contracting, financial management, PERSCO, and services personnel an opportunity to hone the skills they will rely on when they deploy. In February 2007, one of our four-person teams went to Tyndall for an intensive week of mobility training to sharpen their skills. Our team consisted of Capt. Colby Leathers, Tech. Sgt. Alvin Jefferies, and Staff Sgts. Sylvia Bibb and Denise Wesley. While attending SILVER FLAG, they had classroom, obstacle and real world training, including tent buildup and breakdown procedures.

"My experience at Silver Flag was as real world as a simulated environment can be. It was great training and the instruction was exceptional," said Sergeant Bibb.

So, the next time you ponder what it is that the MPF does, remember that we also train to deploy and do whatever it takes to support the mission. Perhaps that



Staff Sgt. Denise Wesley helps set up a tent.

Courtesy photos

908th says thanks to employers

Nearly 20 supervisors and employers of 908th Airlift Wing Air Force Reservists got a chance to see what their workers do in their "part-time jobs." Employers were treated to: a mission briefing by 908th AW Commander Col. Michael J. Underkofler, a tour of the 25th Aerial Port Squadron operations, a C-130H orientation ride and lunch at the River Front Dining Facility April 13. The event was held to pay tribute to the civilian employers of our Guard and Reserve members for allowing service members time off from their primary jobs in order to perform their duties at home stations and in support of U.S. military operations around the globe.



Photo by Jeff Melvin

Employer Frank Butler tries out new equipment at the aerial port.



Photo by Lt. Col. Jerry Lobb

Ryan Stroyls gets a close up look of C-130 cockpit during flight.



Photo by Lt. Col. Jerry Lobb

Capt. Tim McCollum points out C-130 features to his guests Darlene Batchelor and Melinda Meeks.

Web link connects Guardsmen, reservists to employer support network

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON – National Guard and Reserve members now need turn no farther than their computers to get help with employment issues arising from their military service or mobilization.

A new link on the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Web site leads reserve-component members to one of some 900 volunteer ESGR ombudsmen. The link is on the right side of the ESGR Web site at www.esgr.mil.

Users explain the problem they're having and provide contact information for both themselves and their employers, and the information is stored on a secure server. ESGR then assigns the request to an ombudsman who contacts the servicemember within 48 hours to resolve Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act complaints.

The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act is the federal law that protects military reservists' jobs and prohibits employment discrimination on the basis of military service. Ombudsmen initially try to resolve the problem through informal mediation. If that proves unsuccessful within 14 days, the ombudsman will refer the Guardsman or reservist to the U.S. Department of Labor. DOL has statutory authority to enforce the USERRA law.

Officials said the new online USERRA Complaint Request provides a new avenue for providing ESGR services to reserve-component members who need them.

"While Guardsmen and reservists have always been able to email us from the website, the USERRA Complaint Request allows them the opportunity to initiate an ombudsman case online at any time of the day or night," said Philip T. Pope, ESGR's acting executive director. "The online request will complement the customer service center in making ESGR more accessible to Guardsmen and reservists serving all over the world."

Reserve-component members also can continue to use ESGR's customer service center at 800-336-4590 to initiate a request. ESGR is a DoD agency established in 1972 to build and maintain active support from all public and private employers for the men and women of the National Guard and reserve. ESGR volunteers provide free education, consultation, and if necessary, mediation for Guard and reserve employers of Guard and reserve employees. (AFPS)

Online master's degree program provides options for majors

Air University's Air Command and Staff College will begin offering an online master's degree program in June 2007 (Active Duty). Eligible officers will be able to enroll in an educational program that simultaneously fulfills joint professional military education and Air Force intermediate developmental education requirements while at the same time allowing them to earn an accredited master's degree on-line.

Students completing the program will earn a master's degree in military operational art and science. This is the same degree now earned by students attending ACSC in-residence.

"The master's program is a demanding one and will require significant investment in time and effort by the military member," said Col. James Moschgat, vice commandant of ACSC.

The online program consists of 11 eight-week courses – a total of 33 semester hours – covering topics such as contemporary Air Force operations, national security, leadership, and joint warfare challenges and opportunities.

Each course requires from 10 to 14 hours of work per week, a student working steadily through the program will be able to earn a master's degree in approximately 24 months; however, students have up to five years to complete the entire program.

"It is not a lock-step degree program, students are provided flexibility to take the course they want, at the time they want, and to do this at a pace that supports their ops tempo," says Dr. Bart Kessler, dean of distance learning at ACSC.

As part of each course students will participate in online collaborative-learning sessions facilitated by credentialed instructors.

Admissions to the program is not a competitive process, but is limited due to the number of online instructors available, Kessler said. In order to manage demand, ACSC is employing an incremental application process for enrollments.

Initially, the program will have a capacity of 200 to 500 students and will only be open to active duty Air Force majors and major-selects who do not currently possess a master's degree or have not yet completed intermediate developmental education.

Kessler anticipates the program will open to Air Force Reserve majors in August 2007, the program should be able to support its full capacity of 3,000 students by January 2008.

Currently, wing training has not been notified if there will be special requirements for Reserve Majors to enroll in this program. Questions, please contact DPMT's Tech. Sgt. Jo Kaestner at (334) 953-6678.

AU-ABC concept to offer Air Force enlisted chance to earn bachelor's degree

In the near future Air Force enlisted members will be able to pursue not only an associate degree in their AFSC but a bachelor's as well. Community College of the Air Force is working with colleges to determine which schools/programs will participate in a startup program called the Air University Air University Associate to Baccalaureate Cooperative Program or AU – ABC.

The AU ABC concept is straight forward and institutional participation is based upon the criteria already listed on Air Force Virtual Education Center (<https://www.my.af.mil>). Participating schools will deliver programs using distant learning media so any CCAF graduate, located anywhere, can complete the baccalaureate. Every participating student will receive a contract for degree which guarantees degree completion within 60 semester hours after earning their CCAF associate of applied science degree. The schools must provide a full menu of online services for students (i.e. advisement, registration, instruction, library support, tuition assistance processing via the AF Portal, etc.)

The start up goal is to have at least 20 schools offering a range of bachelor's degree opportunities which collectively covers graduates of all 67 CCAF AAS programs.

Member should check the AFVEC for updates on this program. Students can access the AFVEC via AF Portal: <https://www.my.af.mil>. Look under "Top Viewed: Career" you will see the link for the Air Force Virtual Education Center.

Wing training will provide further information as it becomes available. Questions, contact Tech. Sgt. Jo Kaestner, DPMT, at 953-6678.

Take Note

Promotions

Congratulations to the following people promoted to the grades indicated:

....to Master Sgt.
 Cynthia Blais, LRS
 Adam Childers, 357th AS
 Orenthia Herren, ASTS
 Joe Houston, 357th AS
 Anastacia Hunter, 357th AS
 Judith Johnson, AES
 Connie Rollins, MXG
 Rocky Weaver, MXS
to Tech. Sgt.
 Anita Atkinson, MSF
 John Marshall, MXS
 Jason Dunn, SFS
 Don Prempramot, MXS
 Scottie Roberts, 25th APS
 Jamie Womack, MXS
to Staff Sgt.
 Emmanuel Brown, LRS
 Leyvone Griffin Jr, MXS
 Bradley Harrell, AMXS
 Anthony Ransom, ASTS
 Tiesha Simmons, 357th AS
 David Wilson, ASTS
to Senior Airman
 Abby Helton, 25th APS
 Wesley Prater, MXS
 Crystal Bickerstaff,



Three participate in CCAF commencement

Three 908th AW members participated in the Community College of the Air Force graduation ceremony, held April 12 at the USAF Senior NCO Academy. From left, Tech Sgts. DeAnte Houston, 908th ASTS, and Drusilla Amos, 908th LRS, and Senior Master Sgt. Martha Roy, 908th MPF, received associate of applied science degrees. The sergeants earned degrees in allied health, information management, and human resource management, respectively.

Wing surpasses assistance fund goal

The 908th Airlift Wing collected and contributed 105 percent of its Air Force Assistance Fund goal. The 908th donation will go to the Air Force Aid Society, said Master Sgt. Ken Wright, 908th MSF First Sergeant. Sergeant Wright served as the unit's AFAS project officer.

While the organization's donations shouldn't be viewed "with a return on

investment mindset," Sergeant Wright said in times of need the aid society has assisted unit people in excess of their contributions. "Giving to this worthwhile cause is truly one of the ways that the Air Force takes care of its own," the sergeant said.

AFAS is the official charity of the Air Force. AFAS exists solely to help Air Force people (AD, Guard and Reserve), providing emergency assistance, funeral grants, and education grants

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