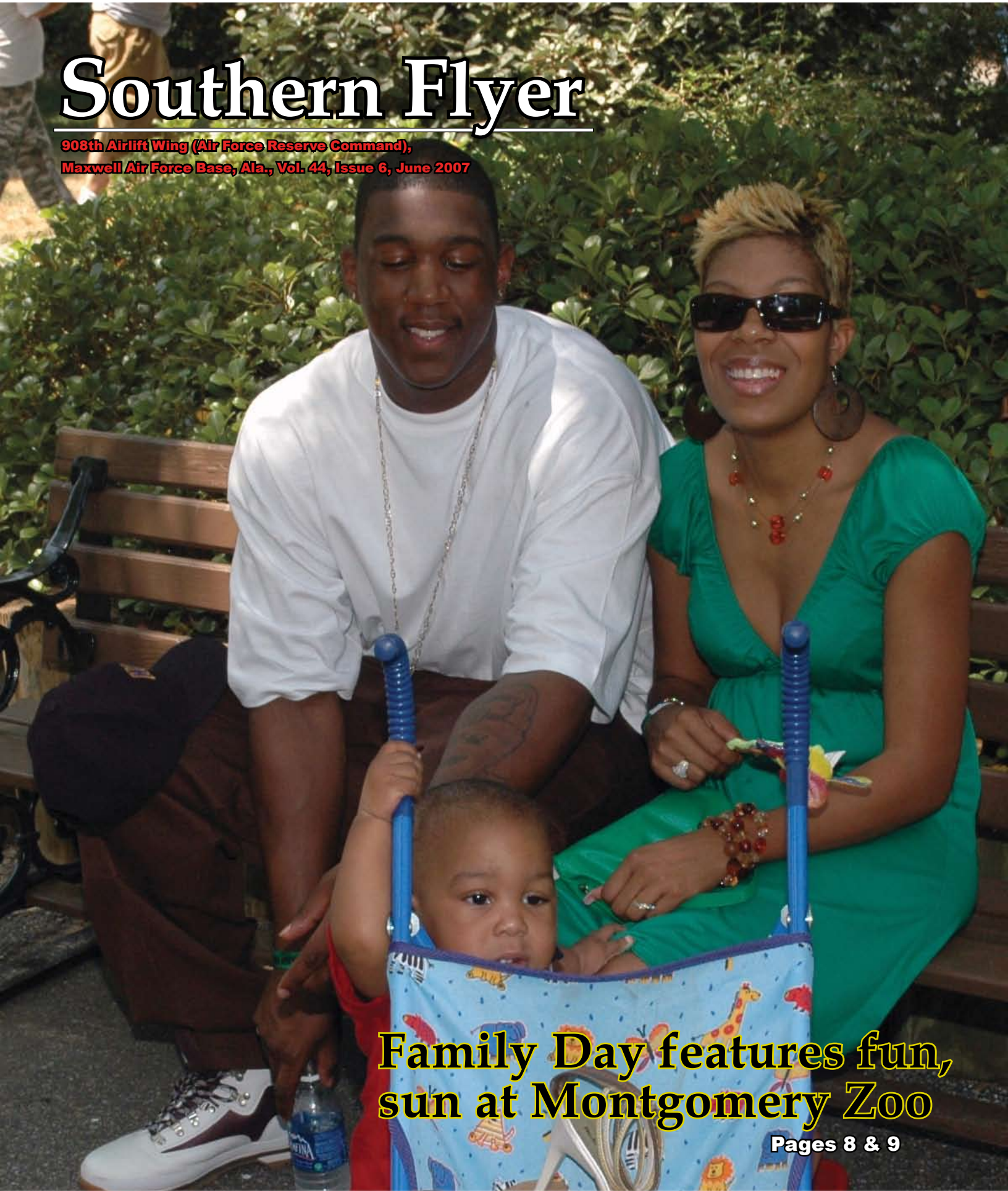


Southern Flyer

908th Airlift Wing (Air Force Reserve Command),
Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala., Vol. 44, Issue 6, June 2007



Family Day features fun,
sun at Montgomery Zoo

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Cover photo...



Photo by Lt. Col. Jerry Lobb

908th Services Flight's Staff Sgt. Willie Johnson, his wife, Jessica, and son, JaKobi, enjoy the scenic grounds of the Montgomery Zoo during Family Day. See Pages 8 and 9 for more Family Day photos.

Southern Flyer

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

Mentoring is the key to better Airmen, building better, more productive wing

By Lt. Col. Nancy Stephenson,
Human Resource Development
Council Executive Committee

The primary aim of the Human Resource Development Council is to help Airmen reach their fullest potential. One of the ways we can accomplish this goal is through "mentoring." No doubt you hear and see the word "mentoring" a lot. It has become such an important buzzword. Despite all the "buzz" about mentoring, some of you may be unclear how it applies to you as members of this wing. Let's take a few moments to clear up some of the confusion.

First, mentoring is not performance feedback. It is an ongoing process to prepare people for the increased responsibilities they will assume as their careers progress. We have not one, but two mentoring programs in the 908th AW: our newly-formed Women Mentoring Women's group and your unit's mentoring program mandated by AFI 36-3401 (which, by the way, will be an item of high interest during our upcoming Unit Compliance Inspection).

Our Women Mentoring Women's Group held its first meeting in April. The purpose for the meeting was simple: to begin establishing the group's goals. I was highly encouraged by the initial

enthusiasm and response. If you were unable to attend the meeting, you can still get involved. Simply send your contact information via e-mail to me at nancy.stephenson@maxwell.af.mil. I'm building an e-mail database of all interested women so I can communicate directly with you about upcoming meetings and events.

One of the group's first actions was the adoption of a suggestion that everyone complete a simple bio. I will e-mail a sample format to you to fill out and return to me so I can create a "book of bios" for us. This will be a great tool for anyone who might be interested in learning about other careers and is a first step to establishing an effective network with other women.

Due to the gym closure on Saturday mornings, our next meeting will be June 3, at 7 a.m., on the second floor of the gym. Tech. Sgt. Loretta Moore, who is an accomplished body builder as well as an expert on how to exercise properly, will give us some training and answer any questions you may have about exercise.

Remember, this group doesn't replace the requirement for our second program: a unit mentoring program. The Women Mentoring Women group enhances or augments the formal mentoring process.

There is no automatic notification process for the unit mentoring program like there is with performance feedback or evaluations. This means unit commanders must create workable solutions and establish a process to ensure that mentoring is accomplished.

Although mentoring is the responsibility of supervisors, I encourage all Airmen to take the initiative to request a mentoring session. During a mentoring session, an AF Form 141 is completed and retained by the mentoree. Documentation of the session must be recorded by the supervisor and filed in each member's personal information file (PIF). For further guidance, a mentoring tool is located via a mentoring link from the 22nd Air Force website. Also, you can contact our career enhancement office at (334) 953-5584 for assistance in establishing a robust mentoring program. Let me reiterate: Mentoring documentation is a UCI-inspectable item. So, act responsibly, follow the proper procedures and the end result will be no write-ups, just accolades!

Make mentoring more than a buzzword; use it to help Airmen reach their fullest potential. Use it to help make the 908th AW a better wing.

Bad things happens to good people

Response tests faith, spirit

By Chaplain (Capt.) David Dersch,
908th AW Chaplain's Office

How you respond to adversity is a great test of your faith and spirit.

Recently I watched the classic movie, "The Miracle Worker," with my family. It tells the story of Helen Keller, a young girl from northern

Alabama who became blind and deaf when she was 19 months old due to an unknown disease. Helen overcame tremendous obstacles to become one of the great personalities of the early 20th century.

But Helen didn't do it alone. Her teacher, Anne Sullivan, was the one whose

faith and spirit saw hope where others saw only defeat. Anne's work with Helen was a direct result of her own personal struggles and victory. Due to her own failing eyesight, Anne had been placed in an infirmary with her crippled brother. As she experienced multiple surgeries to restore her sight,

Airman's Creed, military health care on CSAF's Scope

SAN ANTONIO (AFNEWS) -- The CSAF's Scope focuses on current topics the Air Force chief of staff feels are of special importance to today's Airmen.

Among Gen. T. Michael Moseley's top issues are the new Airman's Creed and military health care.

General Moseley introduced the new creed to replace all the various specialized creeds that have been used in the past, and to focus on the core of what an Airman believes.

"When you read it, reflect on the creed's elements: warrior, heritage, honor and valor," General Moseley said. He also stressed that now more than ever we need every Airman to be combat-ready.

Another top priority is taking care of Airmen, and providing them the highest quality healthcare. Airmen, Soldiers, Sailors, Marines and Coast Guardsmen deserve the best health care possible, he said.

Other topics on the CSAF's Scope include the combat search and rescue mission, Marine-Air Force warfighter talks, and the Airmen's warrior ethos. The general has written a brief explanation of each topic so Airmen can better understand the issues he is working and why they are important to the Air Force's senior leaders.

The CSAF's Scope is available on the Air Force official Web site at <http://www.af.mil/library/cscope.asp>.



U.S. Air Force graphic by Mike Carabajal

The CSAF's Scope focuses on current topics the Air Force chief of staff feels are of special importance to today's Airmen. Among Gen. T. Michael Moseley's top issues is the new Airman's Creed and military health care.

: *Bad things*

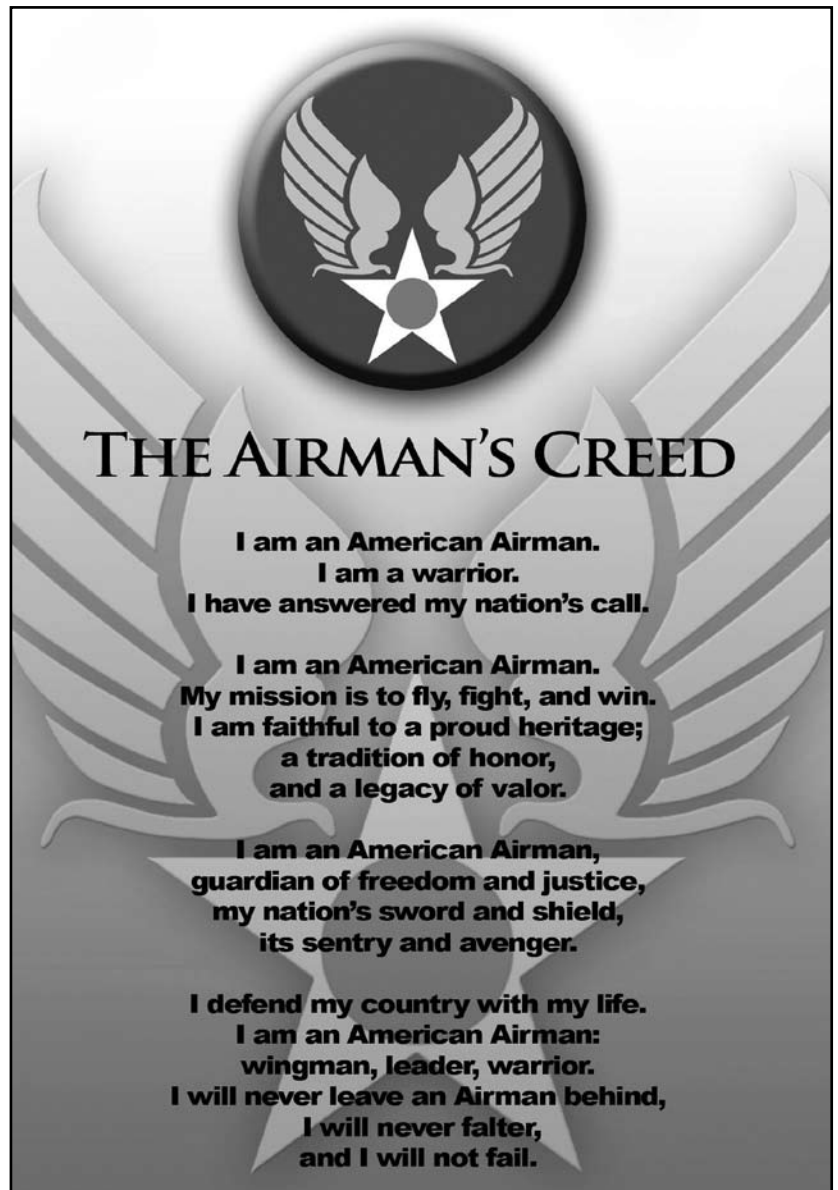
con't from Page 2

the death of her younger brother, and the horrors of a 19th century almshouse/sanitarium, her spirit and faith were tempered like steel in a furnace. She developed into a teacher who would later work "miracles" with the strong-willed Helen.

Many members in the 908th are facing various trials. And if you aren't, just wait. Something is going to come into your life that will test you. It may be unexpected illness, family struggles, a pending deployment, financial reversals, the loss of a loved one, or something unique to you. All of these are tests of our spirit.

As we endure, recognizing that there is light at the end of the tunnel, and that God has a purpose even in those things which seem senseless, our faith will be rewarded. Not only will we be personally blessed, but we will be able to share with others our hope, even as Anne did with Helen.


The chapel service team is here to support you as your spirit is tested. Please don't hesitate to call (334) 953-5372 or stop by and ask any of us for a word of prayer, encouragement, and blessing.



U.S. Air Force graphic by 1st Lt. Marnee A.C. Losurdo

UCI UTA “To Do” List!

By Lt. Col. Troy Vonada
Chief, 908th AW Performance Planning



Every recruit at the United States Marine Corps boot camp quickly becomes familiar with the acronym, PMA, which stands for Positive Mental Attitude. PMA is ingrained in recruits from the time they step off the bus to the time they graduate from boot camp by completing “The Crucible.” The “Crucible” is a 54-hour capstone training event combining mental challenges (Reaction Course, Movement Course), physical challenges (food and sleep deprivation, 40-mile march, confidence course) and moral challenges (Core Values station) to earn the honor of wearing the Eagle, Globe and Claw (Marine Corps emblem). When they receive their Eagle, Globe and Claw they are no longer called recruits – they proudly bear the name “Marines.”

It takes the right attitude to accomplish anything in life. In a scene in the action movie, “Marked for Death,” Steven Seagal turns to his partner and says, “We’re gonna beat the bad guys.” His partner responds, “How could you be so confident?” To which Seagal replies, “Superior training and superior attitude!”

Either example referenced above – PMA or superior training, superior attitude easily applies to our unit compliance inspection preparation. Display plenty of both.

For this UTA, please accomplish the following:

- Complete running your UCI checklists (Due CCX: June 30)
- Complete running the “Common Core” checklist
- Review and/or close any “Open” findings from the 22nd Air Force Staff Assistance Visit
- Attend Wing Commander’s Call (get with PA if retiree or medal recipient)
- If Operations Group member, get ready for Block Training (Be sure to document training!)
- If Operations, Maintenance, Aerial Port, etc., plan for TAC weekend, June 9-10
- If Operations Group member going to combat tactics, pack your bags and complete preparations (AATTC, St. Joseph, Mo. June 16-24)
- 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)

The 908th AW is one of the premier C-130 wings in the Air Force. Let’s be proud of who we are and what we’ve accomplished. As we prepare for the UCI, be sure to have that Positive Mental Attitude by demonstrating it in everything we do. AFRC inspectors will surely be impressed by an empowered Wing of people on fire!

The healthy Airman

Acronyms “just for men”

By Capt. Pamela Sexton
908th Aeromedical Staging Squadron

The military is not the only community that uses acronyms and abbreviations; the medical community has no shortage and frequently utilizes acronyms to discuss conditions, diseases, and tests. In this article, we will discuss some of those acronyms meant “Just for Men.”

TSE and PSA...what do they all mean? They mean something very important for our male population; specifically, they deal with cancer prevention and conditions that only affect males.

TSE stands for testicular self exam. This exam may be either performed by the male himself, or by the physician as part of a physical examination. Testicular self exam, or a clinical testicular exam, is performed as a screening tool to identify any abnormal growths on the testicles. Signs and symptoms of testicular cancer may include a painless lump or mass on the testicle, heavy sensation in the scrotum, lower abdominal aching, and/or enlargement or swelling of the scrotum. Please note...some

men have no symptoms at all.

Monthly TSE is not routinely recommended unless the male has certain risk factors. Risk factors include American or European descent, family history of testicular cancer, or personal history of an undescended testicle (a testicle that has not descended into the scrotum). Please contact your family doctor for a full explanation and instructions.

Testicular cancer is often been referred to as a young man's cancer, but may effect males anywhere between 20 and 54. The cancer is treatable, but the key, as with any type of cancer, is early detection.

Many of you have heard of Lance Armstrong, a famous bicyclist and cancer survivor. Armstrong was diagnosed with testicular cancer at the age of 25, received treatment for the cancer to his testicle, lungs and brain, and went on to win seven straight Tour De France races.

PSA, our next acronym, stands for prostate-specific antigen, and is a specific blood test used in the early detection of prostate cancer. This blood test, in conjunction with a DRE (yet another acronym which stands for digital rectal

exam), is suggested annually after a male reaches the age of 50. Signs and symptoms of prostate cancer may include frequent nighttime urination, difficulty starting/stopping urine flow, weak/interrupted urine flow, painful or burning urination, blood in urine or semen, painful erection, or pain /stiffness in lower back, hips, or thighs. As with testicular cancer, some men may not experience any signs or symptoms. You might have noticed that these symptoms are very close in nature to another acronym... BPH (Benign Prostate Hypertrophy) a noncancerous condition that frequently affects males over the age of 50.

Whereas testicular cancer affects mainly the younger male population, prostate cancer affects mainly older males. Risk factors include being older than 50 years of age, African American descent, family history of prostate cancer, and eating a diet high in animal fat. Prostate cancer is also treatable, but again the key is early detection!

For complete details on these “acronyms” please see your family practitioner. And remember...Early detection and prevention is the key!!!



Photo by Melanie Rodgers

Alabama
governor
honors 908th
Senior NCO

908th Communications Flight's Senior Master Sgt. Greg Black poses for a photo opportunity with Alabama Gov. Bob Riley following a luncheon honoring the 2007 Governor's Outstanding Enlisted Representative Award recipients. The annual award recognizes Army and Air Force enlisted personnel for "dedicated and professional military service to the citizens of Alabama and the United States." Sergeant Black was the 908th AW's Senior NCO of the Year for 2006.

Flight nurse, medic earn healthcare honors

By Jeff Melvin
908th AW Public Affairs

The Association of Military Surgeons of the United States selected two 908th AW reservists as winners of Air Force Reserve Command's AMSUS awards for the second straight year. AMSUS is comprised of more than 9,000 healthcare professionals serving in the active duty, Guard, and Reserve military services, U.S. Public Health Service, and Department of Veterans Affairs.

908th AES's Capt. Richard Foote and Senior Master Sgt. Patrick Weir were selected

as the top officer and top Air Reserve Technician NCO, respectively, assigned to an aeromedical evacuation squadron in 2006. Last year 908th AES received two individual awards and was named top aeromedical evacuation squadron with C-130 as primary aircraft. 908th ASTS took top honors in the aeromedical staging squadron (100-bed) category.

The AES pair was recognized for accomplishments in advancing the healthcare mission of their service through demonstrated compassionate and quality patient care and service, clinical support or healthcare management.

Captain Foote, a flight nurse, is currently deployed to Andrews AFB, Md., where he and other 908th reservists assigned to the 908th have been assisting with moving wounded and injured service members since September 2006. The 908th group is part of a contingent of Air Force Reserve nurses and medical technicians participating in the airlifting of critically wounded soldiers in support of Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom.

He is enrolled in graduate school, working on a master's degree in nursing as a clinical nurse leader. He lauded the

invaluable role his co-workers played in his selection.

The AMSUS award, he said "points to the 908th AES and how well we work as a team, and how well we support each other."

The award also points to the strong leadership in the unit, he added. "Unit leaders give people the tools they need to succeed. I've been in military for 14 years and this is the best unit I've ever been in. I never want to leave the 908th AES,"

The flight nurse is on his third deployment in as many years. He literally loves his job. "I choose to be a flight nurse because of the people, the satisfaction of getting guys and girls back home."

The support he receives at home is as strong as his love for the job. It's easier for him to deploy because of his wife's support and her involvement in the squadron and their support of her when he's gone.

"My wife is very accommodating and understanding. Her father was in the Navy. She gives me all the support I need," he said.

Sergeant Weir, a flight medic, is 908th AES's senior ART. His performance taking care of people at home and while deployed as superintendent of Ramstein Air Base, Germany's 791st Expeditionary AES figured prominently in his selection.

That deployment, he said, was "a complete eye opener." He'd done the job for several years but always as a member of a crew. For the first time he found himself in a position to be able to see the whole AE picture and then to have the autonomy to participate in each portion. "Totally changed my ideas about how to approach my job and the complexity of this job in the larger worldwide AE system," he said.

Like his flight nurse colleague, Captain Foote, Sergeant Weir deflected credit from himself to his co-workers.



Photo by Jeff Melvin

Flight medic Senior Master Sgt. Patrick Weir checks a defibrillator.

"Receiving an award like this is fine but this award lifts me up for things that I do every day because as an ART it's what I owe these people," He said. "It's my job to take care of them. It's my job to make sure they have everything they need to do a very difficult job that most people in the world couldn't or wouldn't want to do."

Being a flight nurse or medic is difficult. Some may wonder why people like Foote or Weir do what they do. Weir says it's a long story but the short version is "I believe that for whatever reason a son or daughter of this country goes to war, goes and does what they do, as a minimum they deserve a group of people to come in and pull them out if/when they've been hurt. It's no more complicated than that. ... Has nothing to do with anything other than I believe it's the right thing to do."

He continues, ... "I serve my country and I love my country but the reason I do this is far simpler than that. The reason I do what I do is that I can do it. It's something that I've found that I can do pretty well and teach others to do, also. It's very fulfilling but in the end I'm no better or worse than anybody else

that walks through these doors. This building is full of honorable people."

He says he didn't want to sound ungrateful or unappreciative about the AMSUS award but rewards in his job are better than any award.

"My reward is that there are times in my life where I get to kneel down next to a total stranger, his or her life is on the line, my life is on the line and they ask me a simple question every human being asks, 'Are we going home.' And I can say, yes, and know there's a pretty good chance they're going home that day and the only reason they're not going home is that we're dead because we're not going to quit."

He said people didn't know a lot about the 908th AES before the war started but over the last five years the unit has received lots of exposure and its reputation has spread.

He added that he could line up medics in the unit that are as qualified and as deserving of some type of award and they just keep doing their jobs. "Whatever I was before I did this job I can barely remember but it wasn't as good as this job has made me," the flight medic said.

What's going on in the 908th

June

2 — Change of Command Ceremony for the 908th SFS. Maj. Chris Simpson will relinquish command to Capt. Richard Pope at 8:30 a.m. in the CE classroom. Major Simpson will be PCSing to the 919th at Duke Field, Fla.

Change of Command Ceremony for the 908th CF. Maj. Patrick Albrecht will relinquish command to Maj. Bruce Coole at 10 a.m. in the CE classroom. Major Coole has been serving as the chief of 908th AW Command Post. Major Albrecht will become the 908th AW Inspector General replacing Lt. Col. Nancy Stephenson who will replace Major Coole.

908th AW Commanders Call. Saturday, 3:30 p.m. Polifka Auditorium.

Military Appreciation Night with the Biscuits sponsored by the Montgomery Chamber of Commerce. 7:05 p.m. The 908th has 150 tickets at the greatly discounted rate of \$3. We have a designated driver program. Contact your First Sergeant, or Master Sgt. Kenneth Wright at 3-8305

July

7 — Lt. Col. Sharon Andrews will assume command of the 908th AES. She replaces Col. Ronnie Roberts who has PCS'd to Youngstown Air Reserve Base, Ohio, to command the 910th Medical Operations Squadron. Time and location TBD.

908th AW Bowling Tournament. The first 10 unit teams (five members per team) to sign up will compete in a 9-pin No Tap (check how to spell this) contest at the Maxwell Bowling Center. Starting at 6 p.m. Other lanes, pool tables, and video games are available on a first-come, first serve basis. For team registration, contact Chief Master Sgt. Lynn Whited at 3-7791. A designated driver program will be available.

August

September

8 — 908th AW Commander's Call. Saturday, 2:30 p.m., Polifka Auditorium.

October

9-14 — Unit Compliance Inspection

Saturday, Oct. 13, Officer's Call at 4 p.m. at the Maxwell AFB Officers' Club.

Sunday, Oct. 14, Run the Runway (1.5- and 2.9-mile options), 7 a.m. behind the 357th AS Building.



Photo by Jeff Melvin

Above, flight nurse Capt. Richard Foote gives visiting civic leaders a briefing on aeromedical evacuation operations. Right, the captain checks on a patient during an AE flight from Andrews AFB, Md.)



Photo by Lt. Col. Jerry Lobb



Patrons prepare to board the tour train as it arrives at the station

Photo by Staff Sgt. Christian Michael

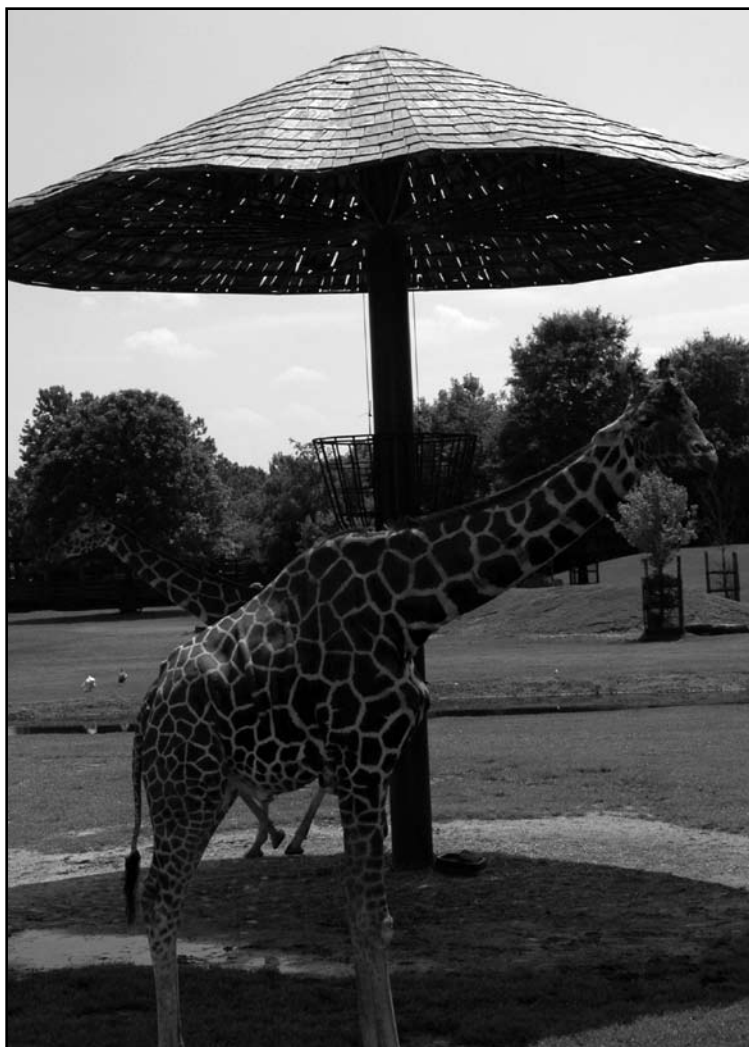


Photo by Lt. Col. Jerry Lobb

Animals like this giraffe were the star attractions.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Christian Michael

Senior Airman Mike Lemke, 908th AES, along with his children, Brendon and



Maj.. Patrick Chastain and family enjoy their lunch

Photo by Staff Sgt. Jay Ponder

Family Day features food, fun, fellowship

The sun held projected bad weather at bay, allowing 908th AW and 187th Fighter Wing members and guests to enjoy a fun-filled Family Day at the Montgomery Zoo, May 5. Although the zoo itself was the main attraction, other activities included children's games, static display vehicles and musical entertainment from the "Capital Sounds," concert band. Unit reservists, guardsmen and family members were treated to a great day of food, fun and fellowship.



Smiling youngsters 'bounce wit it.'

Photo by Lt. Col. Jerry Lobb



Natalia Jordan, 4, daughter of Senior Airman Leslie Jordan, enjoys an ice cream sandwich

Photo by Staff Sgt. Christian Michael



Staff Sgt. Jay Ponder and Brooke

Security Forces Airmen enhance combat skills during Patriot Defender 07

By Tech Sgt. James Harrell
908th Security Forces Squadron

"Our Airmen are our future," said a Patriot Defender cadre member. "NCOs, if you are not taking care of your Airmen, then you don't need to be an NCO!" This was one of the central themes of Patriot Defender Class 07-03. The two-week course hosted by the 610th Security Forces Squadron from Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base Ft. Worth, Texas.

Patriot Defender provides realistic combat training in a safe environment for reservists in the security forces, chaplain service, and services career fields. Patriot Defender is an AFRC sustainment training exercise in ground combat skills. Participants hone and refresh skills needed in today's expeditionary force. A combination of classroom instruction, practical applications, and Military Operations in Urban Terrain training culminates in a realistic three-day field training exercise, replicating duties performed at deployed locations around the world. The training was held at the Camp Swift Texas Army National Guard site near Bastrop, Texas.

Training mainly focused on AEF skills driven by events happening with conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. This type of training helps members survive the particular dangers of missions in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"When our airmen arrive in Baghdad or Kandahar, and get off the plane, they are immediately thrust into combat operations. 'Just In Time' training just does not cover the necessary skill needed for today's conflicts," a Patriot Defender cadre member said.

An example of AEF-focused training is new training on how to identify and counter IEDs, or improvised explosive devices. These devices are the most feared and the biggest killer of soldiers in Iraq and are a weapon of choice for insurgents.

Convoy operations was another example. Vehicle familiarization, certification, and tactics allow members to perform planning, route security, react to enemy fire, and avoid potential hazards such as ambushes.

610th SFS instructors not only instructed, but mentored students. In one segment an Airman was unexpectedly made convoy commander. "All of a sudden I was in charge of an officer, senior NCOs, and my own supervisor," said Senior Airman Gregory Bouie, a 908th SFS fire team grenadier.

Cadre members ensured that the Airman's orders were to be followed without question. "If he is to be an NCO in the future, he has to be given the chance to experience leadership...in this case through a fire hose," said Senior Master Sgt. Ronald Holland, 908th SFS operations superintendent.

Airman Bouie planned and led a convoy and gave orders. When a tactic he used during an enemy contact exercise failed, cadre members gave him a chance to do it over. Afterwards, Senior Airman Bouie said, "I have a better understanding of what officers and NCOs go through in managing people and leading them in combat....now my head hurts."

Class 07-03 made history becoming the first Air Force Reserve training class to use dye marking cartridges – essentially bullets with plastic paint filled tips fired out of real weapons. Special modification to student weapons allowed them to fire paint-filled bullets from 100 yards to as close as 3 feet. The dye marking cartridges are accurate and travel at 600 feet per second. They were used when students were transported to an Army urban combat facility at Ft. Hood. Students donned protective gear and experienced fighting in an urban environment.

This is different from training with MILES. MILES uses lasers and blank cartridges to simulate actual battle. Each Airman carries a helmet and torso harness covered in laser sensors, which detects when the wearer has been illuminated by a firearm's laser or emitter. One of the complaints with the MILES system was that it was open to argument as far as who shot whom first.

The dye marking cartridges mark the target with a colored stain similar to those of paintball. The impact hurts slightly, producing what is known as a "pain penalty" for those who don't practice tactics.

"It was the best training I've ever been through," said Senior Airman Wesley Carnes, a machine gunner. "It's different when something is coming out of a gun pointed at you and you know it will hurt."

Safety was an indispensable part of this training. Checks of magazines, weapons and procedures dominated the process. In the end, the training was successful with no problems.

The final part of the training was the three-day FTX, broken down into base defense and support, convoy operations, and dismounted patrols. The training was set up to allow students to conduct a full day of operations for each portion.

Members of the 908th SFS performed magnificently and represented the principal unit during the training. Two other units, the 310th SFS from Schriever AFB, Colo., and the 940th SFS from Beale AFB, Calif., also attended the training.

Two Airmen from the 908th SFS were recognized for outstanding performance. Senior Airman Anson Pryde earned Top Gun honors, posting one of three high scores during the live fire portion of training. Senior Airman LeArthur Armstead took the other Top Gun honor as well as an Outstanding Performer Award presented by Lt. Col. Mary Lutz, 610th SFS commander.



Right, Tech. Sgt. Higginbotham and a master sergeant from the 310th SFS simulate clearing a hallway during close quarters combat tactics training.



Above, Senior Master Sgt. Ronald Holland emerges from the gunners hatch of an M997 Up Armored HUMVEE during a convoy operations class. Left, Senior Airmen Gregory Bouie and John McKinnon estimate range.



Above, Senior Airmen Christopher Pike and Staff Sgts. Richard Howard and Christopher Moore during land communications class.



Photos by Tech. Sgt. James Harrell

Capt. Richard Pope gives after actions briefing during Convoy operations class.



Photo by Jeff Melvin



Photo by Jeff Melvin

Left, Chaplain (Capt.) David Dersch explain's the day's activities. Above, the visiting clergy receive safety and aircraft familiarization briefing before departure.

Wing says thanks to clergy

Nearly 30 members of the clergy attended "Clergy Day" May 4, an event organized by the 908th AW to thank churches for their support of unit members. The group comprised representatives from multiple denominations. Following lunch at the base dining facility, the clergy received a C-130 orientation flight over the local area as well as briefings about the 908th AW mission and the military chaplaincy program. 908th AW Commander Col. Michael J. Underkofler and the wing chaplain staff hosted the event with assistance from the 42nd Air Base Wing Chaplain's Office.



Photo by Jeff Melvin

The group board's a unit C-130.



Photo by Lt. Col. Jerry Lobb

Bird's eye view

Wing snapshots



Photo by Staff Sgt. Jay Ponder

Even family members couldn't pass up the chance to join the the wing-wide fitness walk on the Maxwell AFB flightline May 6.

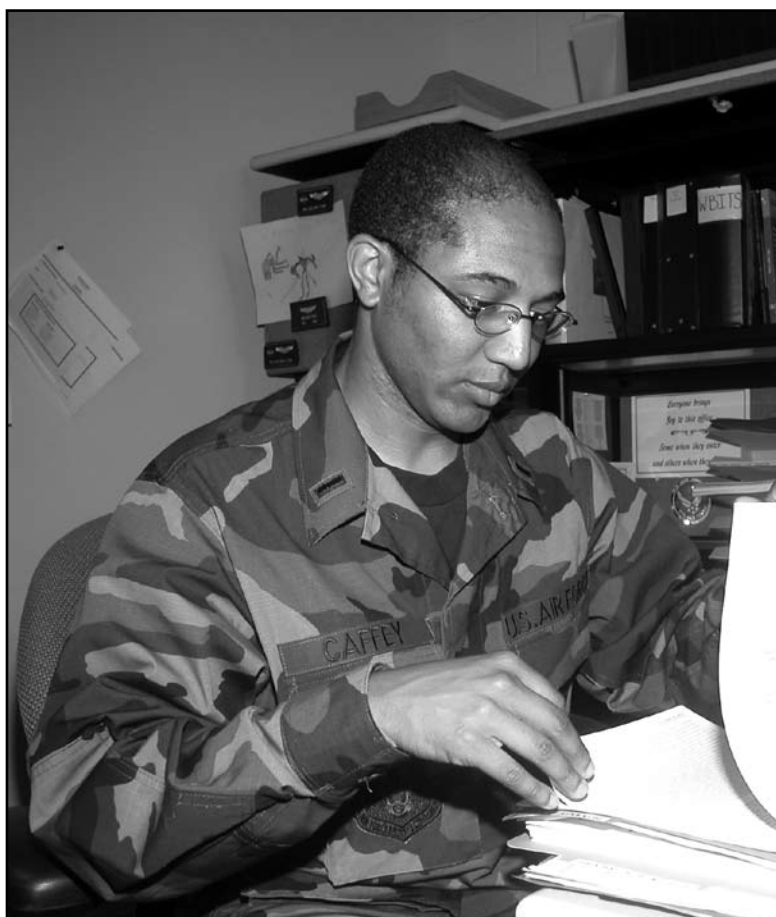


Photo by Staff Sgt. Jay Ponder

First Lt. Arthur Caffey, 908th AES OIC of awards and decorations, reviews awards folders.



Photo by Jeff Melvin

Senior Airman Shea Field, 25th APS, practices operating a forklift.

Defense officials to implement Guard, Reserve changes

by Fred W. Baker III
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON (AFP) – Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates has charged his staff to take action on 20 of 23 recommendations made by an independent commission for changes in the reserve components.

Secretary Gates presented alternatives to the commission's other three recommendations to department leaders.

In a May 10 memorandum released May 16, Secretary Gates tasked Defense Department leaders to respond within two weeks to his call for action based on his office's assessment and endorsement of the recommendations made in March by the Commission of the National Guard and Reserves.

Four of the recommendations are in line with current policies or practices, so no additional action needs to be taken. Nine of the recommendations can be implemented by making changes within the department. Three require changes in law. Four require coordination with the Department of Homeland Security. Secretary Gates offered alternatives to three.

Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs Thomas F. Hall called the secretary's two-week response requirement "warp speed" for the Pentagon.

"Essentially the department is in agreement with the 23 recommendations," Mr. Hall said.

Key policy changes call for revising how the department determines funding and resourcing for the reserves, including its civil support requirements.

Mr. Hall said the department's budgeting and resourcing methods for the reserves are based on decades-old policies.

"We need tanks and things for dual use, but what we really need to look at are ambulances and helicopters and the things to respond to a disaster. And frankly, that's

my focus right now," Mr. Hall said.

"How do we identify what those civil support requirements are? We've not had a methodical way to take a look at those within our budget," he said.

"I think we need to have an entire new equipping strategy for the Guard and Reserve in light of today," Mr. Hall said.

In the memorandum, Secretary Gates charges the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the undersecretary of defense for policy, the National Guard Bureau chief, and the commanders of U.S. Northern, Southern and Pacific commands with advocating for reserve-component civil support requirements and required resources. He also calls for a legislative proposal requiring an annual report to Congress outlining civil support requirements and resourcing.

Secretary Gates agreed with the commission's recommendation that the National Guard Bureau chief not be made a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Mr. Hall said that would make the Guard a de facto fifth service and could cause a competition for resources between the Guard and the chiefs of the Army and Air Force.

"We feel it takes apart, rather than puts together, what we have carefully crafted," Mr. Hall said, referring to a National Guard force integrated into its active component.

Instead, the Defense Department's recommendation is that policy changes name the National Guard Bureau chief as an advisor to the defense secretary and the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

"We feel that's a better way than creating a so-called fifth service," Mr. Hall said.

Secretary Gates also proposed a legislative change that will not limit the grade of the National Guard Bureau chief, currently a three-star position, opening the position up as a possible four-star billet after review.

Secretary Gates disagreed with the commission on making either the U.S. Northern Command's commander or deputy position a mandatory reserve-component officer's billet. Instead, he called for a policy change to modify officer military education and assignments that will allow any position in the military to be filled with the best qualified officer, regardless of component. This eventually could include even combatant commands, Mr. Hall said.

"I have a vision, and I'll admit it's mine," Mr. Hall said, "and that is, one day when we really get total integration, we will have the joint education, the joint assignments, the joint qualifications for any of our National Guard, reserve or active-duty officers, that they can be fully competitive to be either the combatant commander or the deputy commander. I think that would be the day ... in which we will have achieved what we need in joint education and jointness to make them qualified for that."

In response to the commission's charge that governors have no formal channels for dialogue with the Defense Department regarding use, manning, training and equipping of their National Guard assets, Secretary Gates is directing an executive order that will establish a council of governors that would advise his office and the secretary of homeland security.

On the other hand, he disagreed with the commission's recommendation that governors direct federal troops responding to their states in the event of an emergency.

"The secretary did not agree because this is a matter of governance," Mr. Hall said. "It is his belief ... that the commander in chief, the president, should determine who best commands forces in any situation."



Secretary of Defense Robert Gates

Secretary Gates called for protocols to be developed that will allow for federal forces to assist state emergency-response personnel, emphasizing a "unity of effort."

All legislative amendments are expected to be included in the department's legislative program for fiscal 2008.

Initially, the commission was to report on the proposed "National Guard Empowerment Act," which aimed to increase the authority of National Guard leaders. Instead, the commission broadened its report – Strengthening America's Defenses in the New Security Environment – to include U.S. Northern Command, the departments of Homeland Security and Defense, and state governors.

In March, the commission reported that changes are needed to pull together the nation's security team and break down "institutional stove pipes" between agencies.

Commission chair Arnold L. Punaro said he was pleased with Secretary Gates' action on the recommendations.

"The fact that the secretary's review and approval of our recommendations were accomplished so quickly is a clear reflection of the secretary's decisive leadership and support for the needed reforms," Mr. Punaro said.

The commission's final report addressing changes to improve how the National Guard and reserve components are organized, trained, equipped, compensated and supported to best meet U.S. national security objectives will be delivered to Congress and the secretary in January.

Take Note



Photo by Jeff Melvin

Enlisted supervisors undergo leadership training

Twenty 908th AW members graduated from the FY 07 NCO Leadership Development Program held here April 30 through May 11. NCOLDP is designed for mid-level enlisted personnel (E-4 minimum grade), preferably before or during the time they are supervisors. The NCOLDP graduates were: (front row, from left) Tech. Sgt. Dexter Patterson, ASTS; Staff Sgt. Melinda Ford, AES; Staff Sgt. Eva Roberts, SFS; Staff Sgt. Kenyse Savage, MXG; Staff Sgt. Yvonne C. Johnson, AMXS; Senior Airman Peggy Nguyen, MXG; Tech. Sgt. Teresa Lapcheske, MXS; and back row from left, Senior

Airman Michael Conner, ASTS; Tech. Sgt. Quincey M. Hester, MXS; Tech. Sgt. John Mitchell, MSG; Tech. Sgt. Steven L. Higginbotham, SFS; Staff Sgt. Willie Johnson, SVF; Staff Sgt. Clinton Wade, SFS; Tech. Sgt. William Rupinen, CES; Tech. Sgt. Keith Hudson, 25th APS; Tech. Sgt. David Collins, MXG; Senior Airman Danielle Owens, MXG and Tech. Sgt. Michael G. Parish, CES. Not pictured Staff Sgt. Clarence Armour, APS; and Tech. Sgt. Felicia Cunningham, MXG



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