

Southern Flyer

908th Airlift Wing, Air Force Reserve Command , Maxwell AFB, Ala., Vol. 44, Issue 11, November 2007

Units ace inspections

Wing endures alphabet soup of inspections with same results, high marks all around - Pgs 6-10

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Cover photo...



Photo by Jeff Melvin

908th firefighters prepare to enter a unit C-130 aircraft during an Air Force Reserve Command Inspector General team-observed egress exercise. See Pages 6 through 10 for more about the 908th AW's performance during the UCI, MSEP and HSI Oct. 9-14.

Southern Flyer

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

We wowed the IG teams

Whew! The inspection teams have come and gone....and we really did well on our UCI, HSI, and MSEP! Congratulations are in order to every Airman!

Colonel Stewart, the AFRC IG and our former boss, along with the other inspectors said some really nice things about you and our programs. Specifically he said, "There were a number of very strong programs" and overall we are in "good shape". We earned our grades....nothing was given to us, but you knew he was proud to call the 908th AW home.

I too was incredibly proud of the condition of our facilities and programs but also because you shined with professional bearing and appearance.

I sort of miss the old days where we would get into the auditorium and announce all our grades. It was sort of anti-climatic to hear that most UCI areas were graded as "Complied." But that is the highest grade given now. So here's my written whooping and hollering, "Yeah!!!!!! You did great!!!!!!!"

Sure, there are some areas that need a little improvement, and we'll work on them. But consider some of our recent achievements and inspection results:

908th AW UCI - All findings were "comply" or "comply with comments" -absolutely no "non comply" findings

908th MXG MSEP - Program Management - "Outstanding" and Evaluations were "Satisfactory"

908th AES HSI - "Outstanding."

I extend a heartfelt "Thank You" to all who have spent so much time here and at home working to make the wing shine. Please take time to thank your families and spend some time with them. I hope you are able to "throttle back" here and enjoy the upcoming holidays.

With the greatest respect and admiration.

Col UH

Michael J. Underkofler
Commander, 908th Airlift Wing



Thank heaven that's over!

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

You may have heard this expression, or said it yourself, after some particularly trying event, "Thank God that's over!"

Whether it was an academic course that you just hated, an illness or infection that sapped your energy, or a project/inspection at work (like a UCI), you sigh in relief and just want to sit back and relax a bit. Thank the Lord it's over!

Yes, we are grateful for relief from whatever stresses we may be under. And we should

thank God. But instead of just thanking Him that it's over, also take the time to thank Him for the process. After all, it is the fiery furnace that makes tempered steel as hard as it is. It is the pain of practice and preparation that produces the glory of victory and the pride of accomplishment. So this November, while we're thanking God and others during Thanksgiving, remember to look with gratitude at the process, as well as the results.

Thank God for the trials, the tests, the training, the events in your life that have made you the Airman Warrior

you are. And let this gratitude and mindset help sustain you through the next painful experience.

As your chapel team, we thank God that our wing's UCI is over! But we're also thankful for the character and competency that have been developed in our wing as we prepared for the UCI. And, as always, we thank God for you, our fellow Airmen, and the privilege of serving you. If we can help strengthen you spiritually or otherwise, don't hesitate to call or drop by our offices upstairs in the headquarters building.

The federal budget and continuing resolutions

By Staff Sgt. Clairmont Barnes
908th AW Finance technician

Since Oct. 1, 2007, the federal government has operated under a Continuing Resolution Authority. The CRA is a fiscal appropriation that allows the federal government to continue conducting business until the Senate, House of Representatives, and President agree on Fiscal Year 2008 defense funding bills (FY08 runs from 1 Oct. 07 to 30 Sept. 08). It is typical to start a new fiscal year under a CRA as we are doing this year.

The CRA for this fiscal year is for 47 days; therefore, it will end Nov. 16. To cover operating costs for this time, the 908th AW was provided 12.84 percent of the prior year budget authorized under the CRA. Additional CRAs can be passed if additional time is required.

The intent of the CRA is to provide federal organizations with only enough funding to continue current day-to-day operations. Spending under a CRA must be prudent. Items such as military and civilian salaries, limited flying hours, and minor emergency purchases are acceptable. New programs or "nice-to-have" purchases should not be started or made while operating under a CRA. Any spending above normal day-to-day operations must be delayed until the actual FY08 defense budget is signed and units receive the Commander approved initial distribution.

The IG says...

Air Force military and civilian members have a duty to promptly report Fraud Waste and Abuse (FWA) or Gross Mismanagement.

Fraud – Any intentional deception designed to unlawfully deprive the Air Force of something of value or for an individual to secure from the Air Force a benefit, privilege, allowance, or consideration to which he or she is not entitled.

Waste – The extravagant, careless, or needless expenditure of Air Force funds, or the consumption of Air Force property resulting from deficient practices, systems controls, or decisions. The term also includes improper practices not involving prosecutable fraud.

Abuse – Intentional, wrongful, or improper use of Air Force resources. Examples include misuse of rank, position, or authority that causes the loss, or misuse, of resources.

Gross Mismanagement – A management action or inaction that creates a substantial risk of significant adverse impact on the organization's ability to accomplish its mission. It is more than mere, trivial wrongdoing or negligence. It does not include management decisions that are merely debatable, nor does it mean action or inaction that constitutes simple negligence or wrongdoing. There must be an element of blatancy.



Maj. Patrick Albrecht, 908th AW IG

908th Airlift Wing FWA Hotline: 334-953-3353
AFRC FWA Hotline: (800) 223-1784 extension 7-1513
SAF/IGQ FWA Hotline: (800) 538-8429
DoD FWA Hotline: (800) 424-9098

Know where to seek resources on mental health issues

By Maj. Donna Roberts
908th ASTS

Knowing the resources the military provides to valued service members and their families is of utmost importance in dealing with mental health issues. With the goal of reducing stigma, increasing early intervention, and providing needed support and treatment, a number of resources are available through military channels.

The completely anonymous, voluntary Mental Health Self Assessment Program (MH-SAP) can be a valuable early step in identification and treatment of mental health needs. The MHSAP offers self assessment and re-assessment screenings, targeted educational materials, and referrals when needed. It is available on line at www.militarymentalhealth.org or toll free via the MHSAP hotline at 1-877-877-3647.

MHSAP has added a new component in the Department of Defense schools, just this year. It includes mental health training for children and youth in DOD middle and high schools to increase awareness of such conditions as depression and signs of self-harm. It provides educational material for parents and teachers to help them recognize mental health concerns and how to take appropriate action.

Military OneSource (www.military-onesource.com), chaplain services, and other installation support services such as community and family readiness centers can provide counseling, guidance, and referral on many issues that affect deploying service members and their families. Additionally, veterans centers established by the Department of Veteran Affairs provide a limited array of free counseling and other services to members of combat veterans.

Please contact Maj. Donna Roberts or Capt. Donald Bowman, 908th ASTS, at 953-5404 for further information or questions.



A PAGE OUT OF *History*

By Master Sgt. Barbara Harbison
908th AW Historian

In honor of the upcoming 60th Anniversary of the United States Air Force Reserve, I would like to take the current members of the 908th Airlift Wing on a journey back in time.

February 1963, the 908th Troop Carrier Group, Medium, is established at Bates Field in Mobile, Ala., for a short time before moving to Brookley AFB, (still in Mobile) in the fall of 1964. The unit is redesignated 908th Tactical Airlift Group July 1, 1967 and moves to Maxwell AFB in the spring of 1970. Col. Marcus C. West serves as commander of the 908th twice, first in 1967 and again in 1970 when he is called back to the field from his job at the Air Staff to command the 908th Tactical Air Support Group.

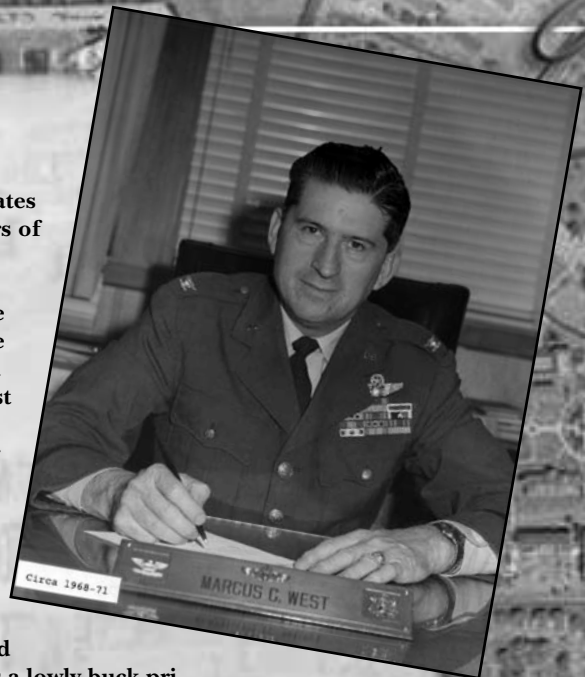
Colonel West is 87 years old now and looks back with pride as he offers these words of inspiration in support of the Air Force Reserve's upcoming 60th anniversary.

"When I was a little skinny country boy on the farm, whose only escape from his dull and hard life was through his daydreams, I never dared hope that someday those daydreams would come true. Moreover, when I first entered the Army Air Corps as a lowly buck private who spent much of his time peeling potatoes while on KP, I thought that first sergeants were among the anointed and that a colonel (there was only one in the entire area, the base commander) was a God. The very idea that someday, I too, would wear the rank of colonel and enjoy the fruits of command (on three different occasions for a total of nearly 10 years) to being a full-fledged member of the famous Air Staff in the Pentagon. It would have boggled my mind to consider that I would command in excess of a 1000 troops and control as many as 25 military aircraft at one time.

"To have been able to attend both Army and Navy flight schools and to have traveled to the far corners of the earth (so to speak), to have fed the people of Berlin through military airlift during their, and our, struggle with the Russians, to have enjoyed the Hawaiian paradise, and to have picked up downed Airmen behind enemy lines in Korea were, to me, almost sacred experiences.

"When reviewing my life, I can say that it has been a very rewarding, often exciting, sometimes dangerous, but never a dull or mundane existence. In old age, when my infirmities, aches and pains become almost unbearable at times, I grit my teeth and try to remember all the good things that have happened to me, and especially my family. I feel truly blessed."

Through the loyal and professional service, Colonel West and his Airmen paved the way for those of us that serve the 908th Airlift Wing with dedication and pride today. The 908th's proud legacy continues through your selfless contributions as you, like your predecessors, lay a solid foundation for the next generation of Airmen to build on the Air Force Reserve tradition.



908th, command looking for recruiters

By Staff Sgt. Jay Ponder
908th AW Public Affairs

Okay, so now you're in the Air Force Reserve, why would you want to talk about being recruited again?

If you're interested in doing something different and getting into a specialty with upward mobility, then you might consider becoming an Air Force Reserve recruiter. Full-time job opportunities are available in Alabama and other states.

Senior Master Sgt. Robert Spears, 908th AW senior recruiter, said the Air Force needs people for recruiting positions all over the country though he is interested in filling his positions first. "We need recruiters who do not mind moving out of the local area because we need recruiters all over the country. There are three recruiting positions open in Alabama," Sergeant Spears said. "Those positions are in Birmingham, Huntsville and in Montgomery located on Eastern Blvd."

He explained how recruiting is a full time job, which includes active-duty benefits. "The first tour will be four years. The individual may then return to being a traditional reservist if he or she likes," he said.

Along with active-duty pay, recruiters receive special duty assignment pay, a supplemental clothing allowance along with the annual clothing allowance and an out-of-pocket expense account.

Spears, who earned certification in three Air Force specialties (nuclear weapons, air cargo and aircraft maintenance) before moving into the recruiting field 10 years ago first in Mobile, then in Atlanta before coming to the 908th in 2005.

"I always wanted to be a recruiter," the Georgia native said. "I saw the opportunity and applied for it. Opportunities for career advancement in the recruiting field are as good as it gets."

Every entry-level slot becomes a technical sergeant billet after one year. But as usual, there's some fine print.

"You have to agree to go where the Air Force Reserve needs you, but we'll try to place people where they want to go," explained the 908th AW senior recruiter.

Once an applicant has entered the recruiting field, there are two ways to advance, the sergeant said. "One way is the steady track. If you're in an office in a specific area and you want to stay. You don't have to move. You can make master sergeant and as long as you are producing you can usually remain there, but you'll retire as a master sergeant."

The other way is the fast track. "On the fast-track, you 'self-nominate' or volunteer to PCS every two to three years while being groomed for upward mobility. "That's how you make SMSgt and Chief."

To be a recruiter, an applicant must attend two schools. First, a one-week evaluation and selection class at Warner-Robins AFB, Ga. Then, if selected, there is the six-week school at Lackland AFB, Texas, where the future recruiter learns the basics of being a recruiter including sales and marketing.

After the schools, recruiter-trainees return to the offices for

which they have been selected and spend nine months to a year on-on-the-job-training.

"Recruiting is not for everyone," Sergeant Spears said. "You have to be a people person. You have to want to get out of the office and work the high schools and colleges as well as work with local media in radio and TV."

Being a recruiter may look easy, but according to an Air Force Reserve Service publication, an applicant must maintain the highest standards of appearance, conduct, military bearing, production and acceptance of responsibility.

Other requirements for applicants are;

- Must be a Senior Airmen and have completed Airman Leadership School
- Must have served at least one year in the Air Force Reserve
- Have no more than 16 years of active-duty time
- Possess high moral standards
- Must be physically fit and have a passing fitness test score

"We have many success stories in recruiting. There are people who began in recruiting as a staff sergeant and eight to nine years later, they're a chief. If someone is interested in becoming a recruiter, the first thing they need to do is call me and make an appointment," said Sergeant Spears.

For more information on how to become a recruiter or to make an appointment, contact Senior Master Sgt. Robert Spears at 334-953-6737 or 334-953-5212 or e-mail robert.spears@maxwell.af.mil.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Jay Ponder
908th AW senior recruiter Senior Master Sgt. Robert Spears

UPCOMING EVENTS

November

- 1-2 — Wing Enlisted Workshop, Maxwell AFB, Airman & Family Readiness Center. Open to all Airman in grades E-1 to E-7, limited to 50. Get with supervisor, first sergeant, and commander to let them know you are interested. Purpose: To help wing members achieve skills that will improve their readiness, financial health, and decision making in military and civilian life.
- 3 — Enlisted Call, 4 p.m., Maxwell Events Center
- 3 — Officers' Call, 4 p.m., Officers' club
- 4 — Operations Group Change of Command, 10 a.m. Bldg. 803, Academic Instructor School
- 4 — ASTS Change of Command, 3 p.m., Bldg. 803 (AIS)
- 11 — Veterans Day (federal holiday)
- 13 — AFA Veterans Day Luncheon, MAFB O'Club
- 14 — Civilian Call, 10 a.m., Bldg. 1055, CES Classroom,
- 11-17 — Montgomery Area Chamber of Commerce "Military Appreciation Week"
- 22 — Thanksgiving (federal holiday)

December

- 1 — Wing Commander's Call, 3:30 p.m., Polifka Auditorium
- 1-2 — Glenn Miller Holiday Concert, Davis Theater
- 1-31 — Christmas Lights @ Montgomery Zoo, 5:30 to 9:30 p.m., \$8 adults, \$5 ages 3 and older
- 25 — Christmas (federal holiday)

January

- 1 — New Years Day (federal holiday)
- 5 — Bowling tournament. First 10 unit teams to sign up (five members per team) compete in a 9-pin No Tap contest at Maxwell Bowling Center starting at 6 p.m. Other lanes, pool tables and video games available on a first-come, first served basis. For team registration, contact Chief Master Sgt. Lyn Whited at 3-7791.
- 21 — Martin Luther King Birthday Observed (federal holiday)

Wing aces inspections

UCI, MSEP, HSI -- wing endures alphabet soup of inspections with same results, high marks all around

By Jeff Melvin
908th AW Public Affairs

Wing members breathed a collective sigh of relief around mid-day Sunday, Oct. 14, as word of the preliminary results of the multiple inspections occupying almost everyone's attention started to spread.

"We kicked butt," said 908th Air-lift Wing commander Col. Michael J. Underkofler, not mincing words as he expressed his pleasure with the wing's performance during the Air Force Reserve Command Inspector General team's five day visit here Oct. 9-14.

The IG team administered a unit compliance inspection and took a detailed look at wing maintenance and aeromedical evacuation operations via a maintenance standardization/evaluation program inspection for the 908th Maintenance Group and a health services inspection for the 908th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron.

The results, the colonel said, were good on all fronts. He recapped the highlights, saying, "There were only 39 total findings during the UCI – none critical, and nearly three fourths minor. We had one section named a superior team; (Chaplain Program), four superior performers; and one member recognized for superb dress and appearance. The 908th AES earned the highest rating during its health services inspection, a practically unheard of feat in the medical world. And, the 908th Maintenance Group's maintenance standardization/evaluation program inspection, again, phenomenal results – high rating on program management and a favorable rating on evaluations. Wow!"

Colonel Underkofler added that the spectacular showing is particularly noteworthy since the 908th flew more hours per unit-owned airplane last year than any other non-mobilized C-130 unit in the command.

"Couple the highly favorable inspection results with the spirit of volunteerism that we always have.....and the way we make missions happen..... the 908 AW simply can't be beat," the colonel said, beaming with pride.



Photo by Lt. Col. Jerry Lobb

The IG team recognized wing training's Master Sgt. Rod Parker for superior dress and appearance.



Above, the chaplain staff was named a strong, Tech. Sgt. Tonya Peterson and Michael Parish rewired a light fixture a



Photo by Lt. Col. Jerry Lobb

Colonel Underkofler presents superior performer award to Financial Management's Deborah Smith.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Christian Michael

superior team: They are: (from left) Capt. Val Shumate, Staff Sgt. Jared Ling, Lt. Col. Philip Armbrister, and Capt. David Dersch. Right, Civil Engineering's Senior Airman Allen Jordan watches Tech. Sgt. Allen Jordan at the new security forces building. The IG team named Airman Jordan a superior performer.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Jay Ponder



Photo by Staff Sgt. Jay Ponder

Above, superior performer Tech. Sgt. Kelly Beeler, 908th Security Force Squadron. Right, superior performer Senior Master Sgt. Terry Shook, 908th AW Safety Office, and AFRC Inspector General Col. James Stewart.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Christian Michael

IG exercises test reserve firefighters



908th firefighters simulate rescuing a victim in the aircraft egress exercise.



Chief Master Sgt. Frank Wombwell, right, IG inspector, and 908th firefighter Senior Airman Mattie Taylor, standing, discuss first aid issues with Senior Airman Charles Huys.



Senior Airman V





William Kent exits the aircraft during the egress exercise.



908th firefighters preparing to make entry during the structural exercise.



Photos By Jeff Melvin

Above, Staff Sgt. Scott Boyd advances an attack line during the structural exercise. Left, Staff Sgt. Anthony Cunningham operates the pump on the fire truck during the structural exercise.



Maintainers, flight nurses, medics earn kudos



Photo by Lt. Col. Jerry Lobb

908th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron flight nurse Lt. Col. Scott Starr chats with a patient onboard a wing C-130. AES received exceptionally high marks on their health services inspection, delivered in conjunction with the AFRC IG team's visit to 908th AW. Right, MSEP performance evaluator Master Sgt. Michael Brannon observes 908th Maintenance Squadron's Tech. Sgt. Wayne Askew install a horizontal situation indicator in the cockpit of a wing C-130.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Jay Ponder

From left, Senior Airman Timothy Smith; MXS, Tech. Sgt. Michael Swims, MXS, Master Sgt. Michael McGill, Aircraft MXS, and Tech. Sgt. Teresa Lapcheske. The four maintainers help the maintenance group earn high ratings by the maintenance standardization/evaluation program inspectors and were named superior performers.



Photo by Lt. Col. Jerry Lobb

Healthy Airmen Protect yourselves during flu season

Lt. Col. Carol Anders
908th ASTS

More than 600 908th AW members received flu vaccine over the October UTA. As we enter the flu season, vaccination is vital to protect us. No doubt, you're aware many people mistakenly believe getting an influenza SHOT causes influenza. This is false. The vaccine is made from a killed virus; therefore, it cannot give you influenza.

Influenza remains among the leading causes of preventable illness and death. Yet its impact on individual health and the public health is largely underestimated by the general public. About 5 to 20 percent of the U.S. population contract influenza annually and the resultant hospitalizations and deaths remain high. Approximately 36,000 deaths occur annually because of influenza and 226,000 hospitalizations are attributed to influenza. While the most deaths and hospitalizations occur in the elderly, risk of influenza-related morbidity and mortality increases in persons with certain chronic illnesses, pregnant women and adults in close contact with persons at high-risk.

Influenza causes more hospitalizations and deaths among American children than any other vaccine-preventable disease, yet most influenza infections in children are not recognized clinically. Preschool and school-age children are at highest risk of getting influenza, but children with asthma and heart disease are at greater risk of complications should they get the disease.

Influenza is a viral disease. Incubation period is 1-4 days after exposure. Illness can last up to 7 days. The infected adult is infectious from one day before the onset of illness to 5 or more days afterward. Infected children are infectious 10 or

more days after the onset of the illness and several days prior to the onset of illness.

The influenza virus is transmitted by airborne respiratory drops from coughing and sneezing. It is transferred by physical contact by touching something with the influenza virus on it and then touching the mouth or nose. To lessen the possibility of transmission if you are infected, cover your mouth when coughing or sneezing and then wash your hands. To protect yourself from getting ill, get vaccinated and wash your hands often.

How do you tell if you have influenza or a cold? Just making a diagnosis by symptoms alone can be difficult because symptoms are very similar. Diagnosis relies on physical exam, evaluation of symptoms and lab work that includes a nasopharyngeal culture. Rapid diagnostic tests may be helpful to providers to make an early and accurate diagnosis.

Treatment if you do get influenza is two-fold: medications and life style changes. Over-the-counter drugs treat the symptoms, but do not treat the virus. These include Aspirin or Tylenol (Remember children and teens **SHOULD NOT** be given aspirin or other salicylate-containing medication); antihistamines; expectorants; cough suppressants and decongestants. Medication by prescription is antiviral therapy. These medications must be taken within two days of the disease starting. **ANTIBIOTICS DO NOT WORK AGAINST INFLUENZA, BECAUSE IT IS A VIRUS.** Life style changes include rest, drink plenty of fluids, refrain from alcohol and tobacco use and take medications to relieve symptoms.

Protect yourself and your family by getting the flu vaccine, seek treatment early and rest. (Source: www.cdc.gov/flu/)



Cold or Flu?

How do you know if you have a cold or the flu? Here are symptoms of the two illnesses

SYMPTOM	COLD	FLU
Fever	Rare	Usually high, sudden onset Lasts 3 - 4 days
Headaches	Rare	Frequent
Aches & Pains	Slight	Usual often quite severe
Weakness	Rare / mild	Moderate to extreme Can last up to one month
Bedridden	Rarely	Frequently lasts 5 to 10 days
Sniffles	Common	Sometimes
Sneezing	Usual	Sometimes
Sore Throat	Common	Sometimes
Cough	Sometimes Mild to moderate	Usual can become severe
Complications	Sinus or ear infection	Pneumonia, kidney failure, heart failure, can be life threatening



Photo by Staff Sgt. Christian Michael

Flu season is back

Tech. Sgt. Dennis Williams, ASTS medical technician, administers a flu shot to ASTS commander Col. Ben Busbee. All 908th AW members should receive the flu vaccine or flu mist by Dec. 31 either through a military treatment facility or through their own healthcare provider. This applies whether here at Maxwell or TDY. Reservists who receive the shot from a civilian source, must bring in documentation of receipt by Dec 31 too. All suspected adverse reactions to the flu vaccine must be reported to a 908th AW healthcare provider. Civilian employees are urged to take action through their family physician or community public health department to receive a flu immunization. Receiving a flu shot before the peak of the flu season provides optimal protection.

Wing snapshots



Photo By Staff Sgt. Christian Michael

Above, Tech. Sgt. Michael Smithers, 908th ASTS medical lab technician, and Senior Airman Dewanna Robinson, 908th ASTS cardio pulmonary respiratory therapy technician, load a centrifuge with blood samples drawn from 908th AW members. Airman Robinson is spending time at the laboratory in preparation for her retraining into the laboratory career field.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Jay Ponder

Danielle, left, and Lindsay Mahan, right, pin oversized chevrons on their dad, then-Senior Master Sgt. Kenneth Mahan, symbolizing his promotion to the highest enlisted grade. Members of the 908th AW Chief's Group marked the occasion with an induction ceremony attended by Chief Mahan's family, friends, co-workers and well-wishers. Chief Mahan is 908th AMXS's maintenance superintendent. Danielle, 19, is a college sophomore; Lindsay, 12, lives at home with Chief and Mrs. Mahan. Lindsay celebrated her birthday just days prior to her dad's promotion.



Photo By Staff Sgt. Jay Ponder

Master Sgt. Michael Smith, left, MXS, left, and Tech. Sgt. Glenn Swindle, AMXS, help each other stretch out in preparation for the October UTA Wing Run/Walk.



Courtesy photo

Mobilization assistant to the Air University commander Brig. Gen. Edward Crowell, a former longtime 908th AW member poses for a photo opportunity with the 908th group attending the Tuskegee Airmen Inc. National Convention in Dallas in July. The 908th group attended the convention under the auspices of the wing human resource development council. They are: (from, left) Tech. Sgt. Drusilla Amos, Staff Sgt. Kenyse Savage, Senior Airman Crystal Bickerrstaff, Staff Sgt. Clyde Reliford and former 908th AW Command Chief Amos Moore, a special liaison to the AFRC HRDC.

Force development starts with a plan

By Master Sgt. J.C. Woodring
Air Reserve Personnel Center Public Affairs

DENVER – How do Air Reserve Personnel Center officials get Reserve officers to embrace career advice offered through force development programs without fear of being “forced” into something they do not want?

That is a question Lt. Col. Vince Bugeja, ARPC's force development chief, has been asking himself since the program began in May 2006.

“If I can get our Airmen to understand one thing, it would be this: In the Reserve, force development will never be ‘forced development.’ We will always respect the Citizen Airman mantra,” he explained at the Air Force Reserve Command commander's conference recently. “We will never force an Airman to take an assignment, and we will never force a commander to hire a specific Airman. This would go against what our Airmen have signed up to do.”

Once Airmen understand that, Colonel Bugeja said he hopes they will be more receptive to participating in the system, which starts with them filling out the Reserve Officer Development Plan.

“A lot of Airmen won't fill out the form because they think it will put them on the radar to get an assignment,” he said.

Colonel Bugeja offers a simple way to

keep from getting an unwanted assignment, “Tell us on your R-ODP you don't want to move. There is a lot of other career advice we could give to you while respecting your wishes not to move.”

Unfortunately, a vast majority of R-ODPs are not completed. In fact, of the 16,250 Airmen's records reviewed so far, 10,348 did not have anything on their R-ODPs, which equals 64 percent. Of the 36 percent that had been at least started, 4,777 had been completed, but only 2,411 were endorsed by their commander.

“To make this process work the most effectively, we need all of our officers to have their R-ODPs completed and endorsed by their commander,” Colonel Bugeja said.

Once each Airman completes his or her plan, career field-specific development teams meet at ARPC to review the plans of all their officers, which includes Airmen in active guard reserve, individual mobilization augmentees, air reserve technicians and traditional reservist categories.

When they meet, the teams provide “vectors” or career advice on career field progression including recommendations on professional military education, education and other development. They also recommend Airmen for squadron command and key qualification requirement consideration.

“A big part of what our development

teams do is advise and support commanders and other senior leaders,” Colonel Bugeja said. “We are trying to give commanders an additional pool of qualified candidates for consideration.”

Getting career advice may be a great thing, but if the Airmen don't know how to implement the suggestions, it could all be for naught.

“This is why we've started to add assignment facilitators to the development teams of some of our mature career fields,” Colonel Bugeja said.

They will take part in their development team events, and will, in turn, help the Airmen understand what opportunities are available and provide commanders a deeper candidate pool from which to choose.

“Basically, these facilitators can help the Airmen navigate the personnel channels to get their desired results based on the development team's counsel,” he said.

Development teams do not select people for positions or PME. Neither do they make job assignments or recommendations to promotion boards, he stressed.

“In the past, only those with good mentors or supervisors received good counsel,” Colonel Bugeja said. “Now, everybody will get the counsel that they deserve, and the Air Force benefits because we deliberately produce our own leaders.” (An ARPC News Release)

Senate aides visit Maxwell AFB, 908th AW

Aides to Ala. Sen. Richard Shelby get a bird's eye view of a unit C-130 aircraft during a brief tour of unit facilities conducted by 908th AW Commander Col. Michael J. Underkofler Oct. 11. The senator's aides stopped by the 908th during a visit to Maxwell AFB for an Air University familiarization briefing and base tour. The Senate staffers are: Mike Brumas, right, Senator Shelby's chief of staff, Vera Jordan, the senator's Montgomery-based representative and Watson Donald, the senator's legislative assistant.



Photo By Lt. Col. Jerry Lobb

Take Note

Using GTC for personal use is a no-no

With the holidays just around the corner, 908th Airlift military and civilian members are reminded not to make the simple mistake of using the wrong credit card to make purchases. The Government Travel Card is available to Department of Defense employees with the strict understanding that it will not be abused or misused in any way. Use of the GTC is a benefit, not an entitlement, and misuse or irresponsibility can reflect negatively on your credit and your career. So remember, the GTC may only be used for official travel purposes when on official government orders; never for personal use. Pay attention when making personal purchases and make sure you don't use the GTC.



Modified Air Force graphic

Promotions

Congratulations to the following people promoted to the grades indicated:

....to Chief Master Sgt.
Cameron Kirksey, LRS

....to Senior Master Sgt.
Thomas Corporon, MXG
Brent Hardie, MXG
Joseph Martin, MXG

....to Master Sgt.
Michael Moody, LRS

....to Tech. Sgt.
Timothy Denson, AMXS
Alex Felevov, MXS
LaTonya Hambricht, AES
Michelle Haynes, ASTS
Crystal Montague, ASTS

....to Staff Sgt.
LeArthur Armstead, SFS
Kanika Blackmon, LRS
James Bowler, 25th APS
Kimberly Boyd, MXG
Xavier Bryant, LRS
Kathryn Dearing, 25th APS
Stephen DeGracia, ASTS
Karen Hamblin, AES
Kenneth Kibble, SFS
Jessica Knizel, ASTS
David Williams, MXS

....to Senior Airman
Dustin Fleming, ASTS

....to Airman 1st Class
Stephanie Martin, ASTS

....to Airman
Kevin Summersill, CES



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Sonny Cohrs

Wing aircrew provides Hurricane Felix relief

PUERTO CABEZAS, Nicaragua – 908th Airlift Wing C-130 delivers a P-19 fire truck from Soto Cano Air Base, Honduras, during a Coronet Oak mission Sept. 14. The truck provided firefighting capabilities at the airstrip as military aircraft delivered supplies to outlying areas after landfall of Hurricane Felix. Coronet Oak is an ongoing all Reserve and Guard operation providing airlift in Central and South America. 908th AW aircrew, maintenance and support personnel normally participate in two to three Coronet Oak rotations each year. See the full image on Air Force Link at http://www.12af.acc.af.mil/news/story_media.asp?id=123068378

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