

# SOUTHERN FLYER

## Up, Up, & Away

**Aircrews  
sharpen  
SERE skills**



SOUTHERN  
FLYER

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## PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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## How do you spell success?

Career Development: R-ODP, R-EDP, RSSB, CCAF, PME, ALS, NCOA, SNCOA, OTS, SOC, IDE, SDE, and LLT. That's the new alphabet soup floating around not only this wing but has been making itself known Air Force-wide. If you don't know what these are, you need to understand these are programs, schools and development plans that are a necessary springboard to personal career development and future opportunities in today's military service.

For service members, not accomplishing them or taking them seriously can be the difference between getting promoted or staying stagnant. Our work environment gears us to working a specific occupation. We were sent to technical schools, school houses geared for specific AFSCs (i.e., Flight schools), on-the-job training, etc. to advance our training.

As you completed your job competencies and training cycles, you advanced your knowledge of your

career choice...but is that all there is? The answer is a resounding "NO!"

As you've advanced in your career, you may have noticed your career aspirations and goals have changed. This makes it necessary to manage your career, not just training in your AFSC and doing your job, but by developing the "whole" person concept. This is what the R-ODP and the R-EDP is about.



LT. COL. JACQUELINE JACOBS  
Commander, 908th AES

They are the Reserve Officers Development Plan and the Reserve Enlisted Development Plan, put in place by our Air Force leadership to help the Air Force help you.

For our enlisted corps, the past few months have brought incredible changes and requirements to your career pathways. By filling out the R-EDP, you will find you are able to plan for the changes that have occurred. These development plans allow you to map out your career by increments including short-term and long-term goals. You can do this in one, three and five year increments. Your plans are then sent to a development board that looks at your

CAREER, PAGE 10

A MOMENT WITH THE  
CHAPLAIN

SRA DUSTIN TURNER

As summer break nears an end, it reminds us that life is in constant transition. For some parents, the days of sleeping late are numbered. Mornings will no longer be quiet, lazy times. Soon, kids will be scrambling around getting dressed, finding homework and grabbing breakfast on the run. For them, life will be math and science, not swimming and sleepovers.

Like the change from summer to school, military members also face transitions. When we're tasked with a deployment, we and our families, face huge changes. We have to adjust to life in a foreign place while our spouses adjust to life as a single parent. Our children have to adjust to life without us. Once the deployment has ended, there is a major struggle getting readjusted.

Not only do we face transitions at home, but also with our civilian employment. During TDYs and UTAs, we perform a certain job for the Air Force. For many of us, our civilian jobs are not the same. It's always an adjustment getting back in the civilian mindset.

Fortunately, there are agencies to assist with these transitions. The Chaplains Office is your resource for confidential counseling and spiritual care. Yellow Ribbon events are opportunities to help you and you family readjust. Military One Source can help find many helpful resources.

Call on us. We're always here to assist in any way we can.

VOUCHER TREK  
Detailing the E-Finance trip package process

By Debbie Smith  
908th FM

We want to share with you the trip your travel voucher takes when it processes through E-Finance. A copy of the E-Finance slides was resent to all units July 18.

1. If the order states member is to file voucher via RTS:

Go to the AF Portal and log into E-Finance. Follow the steps and accomplish the travel voucher. (Please have the E-Finance slides available if this is your first time in E-Finance.) Once completed, send the voucher to your supervisor for signature/approval.

2. Once the voucher has been signed/approved by your supervisor, it will then flow to base FSO for review. You can check the status of your voucher by logging into E-Finance and checking the "status" bar. If you hover your cursor over the status code, it will let you know what the code represents.

Here is the list of the status codes

in E-Finance:

**Q5 – Awaiting FSO Approval:**

Base FSO has to review the voucher before they are sent to AFFSC (Air Force Financial Service Center) for payment.

**Q0 – Not Submitted (Returned/Rejected):** Member needs to go back into voucher and complete/fix voucher. The FSO should put a comment as to why the voucher is being returned.

**Q6 – Awaiting Supervisor Approval:** Need to contact your supervisor and let them know you have a travel voucher that needs their approval in E-Finance.

**R0 – Voucher Complete:** At this point your voucher has been submitted to AFFSC for payment. Your voucher will be paid at this point unless it is returned. If voucher is returned it will be sent to the base FSO and a copy will be sent to 908th AW/FM with the reason for the return. The 908th FM will contact your unit

TRAVEL, PAGE 12

## COVER PHOTO:

Aircrews from the 908th Operations Group recently met the requirement for water survival and rescue training in the Alabama River with help from local and state law enforcement agencies.



"Providing combat-ready support across the spectrum of operations"



U.S. Air Force Photo/  
Master Sgt. Eric Sharman

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# Hartle departs for AWC

Maintenance group deputy looking forward to new career challenges, opportunities

By Gene H. Hughes  
908th AW Public Affairs

Change comes in cycles at the 908th Airlift Wing. Policies and processes undergo adaptation and evolution, personnel transition and career doors open and close.

A door has opened for Lt. Col. James L. Hartle, deputy commander of the 908th Maintenance Group. As a result, he will depart the wing for a new assignment.

A familiar face in the hangars and out on the flightline, Hartle will be exchanging his tool kit for text books as he attends Air War College in preparation for a future promotion to colonel.

It's a transition he's looking forward to.

"I look forward to the opportunity to learn, at a very strategic level — the problems, solutions and complexities our Air Force faces today," he said.

Like so many others, Hartle was leaning towards military service, and the Air Force made the choice quite simple.

"They paid for college," he said. "I wanted to serve, and the fact that they paid for my college via ROTC was a bonus."

He served in the active component for 10 years before joining the 908th in November of 2012. His deployments include three tours in Turkey, two in Kuwait and another in Qatar. He said his favorite was his post-9/11 OEF deployment in support of forces within Afghanistan.

He's been a large part of the maintenance group's success in the interim period between deployments, helping to guide the 908th knucklebusters through major inspections and aircraft upgrades. He said he'll definitely miss being part of the day-to-day operations of the wing.

"I'll miss the daily camaraderie the most," he said. "The best part about being a member of the 908th ... it's all about the people — sharp maintainers interested in getting the job done."

Hartle has seen a lot of changes during his time with the wing, with many new faces in key positions, but wherever he goes, Hartle believes his time at Maxwell will be a benefit to his commanders and Airmen. He said his 908th experience will allow him to bring a unit-equipped, Reserve-unit perspective to the table.

"The 908th is rich in history and has an enduring legacy that will continue for many years," he said. "I'm honored to have been a part of that legacy, and even more proud to now be part of the history. Every member of the wing is writing their own history in the scrolls of the 908th."

He concluded by leaving wing members some final words of encouragement.

"Ensure that the lasting legacy you leave is one of pride, professionalism and enduring airmanship!"



Wing's SERE Specialist has one teaching objective for aircrews:

# Keep Yourself Alive

By Gene H. Hughes  
908th AW Public Affairs

When it comes to risky jobs, being a member of an aircrew ranks fairly high on the list.

Aside from heavy machinery, moving metal parts, toxic chemicals, flammable fuels and large amounts of cargo/personnel, the potential for mishap and injury is always present. But there's another risk, which is the possibility of capture, imprisonment and torture by the enemy.

Staff Sgt. Cody Speckman is the 908th Airlift Wing's new Survival Evasion Resistance Escape (SERE) Specialist. Together with Staff Sgt. Patrick Harrington, he is responsible for making sure that aircrew members are prepared that possibility.

"Sergeant Harrington and I are working together to create exceptional training courses for the 908th aircrew members," he said. "With our combined experience in program development, maintenance, classroom and field instruction, joint operations, personnel recovery planning and execution, we hope to advance our knowledge and abilities through cooperation with the unit."

Originally from Colorado Springs, Colo., Speckman's motivation for joining the Air Force was simple. His older brother had joined out of high school, had deployed to Iraq immediately after September 11 and shared stories about his challenges in the military.

"I admired his bravery to go overseas," Speckman said. "He never



once complained, refused, or tried to stay in the United States. He acted as if it was an honor to serve this country. I wanted to be like him."

Speckman began his career at Fairchild AFB, and subsequently was assigned to the squadron where the best SERE Specialists go. There, he eventually became the Operations NCO before deploying to the Middle East. Once deployed, he was selected from a group of 12 SERE Specialists to travel around the Middle East to help train a wide variety of personnel in survival techniques.

Speckman spent the next five months traveling on his own as a Senior Airman.

"Still to this day I think how crazy that was," he said. "I was able to work with British and Canadian forces, different U.S. government agencies such as NASA and the FBI, and all branches of the American military, including rescue and Army Special Forces teams. It truly was a

privilege to work with such a united force that believed in fighting against the terrorist ideology."

"A famous quote (by George Orwell, author of *1984* and *Animal Farm*) I heard from the fighting members was, 'People sleep peacefully in their beds at night only because rough men stand ready to do violence on their behalf.'"

When he returned, he was sent back to Fairchild, and assigned to the Resistance Training section.

After that, he was assigned to Barksdale AFB, La., to work with B-52 aircrew members. He joined the 908th in November of 2014.

"Presently the 908th SERE program is in the infancy stage of development," he said. "It's a privilege to build an organically run and efficient program."

To accomplish such a goal takes a great deal of trust, something Speckman has received in abundance from



# MERE TRAINING MAKING A SPLASH

Survival training boosted by local agency support

By Master Sgt. Eric Sharman  
Photos by Lt. Col. Jerry Lobb & Master Sgt. Eric Sharman  
908th Public Affairs

An AC-130 gunship, with seven souls on board, is no longer viable.

Over the Gulf of Mexico, hundreds of miles from any airfield, the aircraft is going down. With only a personal life raft on them and a 20-man raft they must swim to reach, the aircrew has to know how to outlast the ocean until they are plucked from the sea. Whatever mission they had before, there is only one now, survive.

A harrowing situation, but one the Airmen of the 357th Airlift Squadron trained for during a joint exercise here, July 11. The biannual training, which took place at the Maxwell entrance to the Alabama River, was a joint endeavor between the 908th, Montgomery Police and Fire Departments, and the aviation division of the Alabama Law Enforcement Agency.

Led by 908th SERE instructor Staff Sgt. Cody Speckman, the training covered several disciplines of water survival, the first of which was how to operate the personal survival equipment they carry, and that which is carried aboard the aircraft.

The training began with aircrew members entering the water with life vests, and mounting the personal life rafts. The personal life raft is a key piece of equipment stored on the aircrew survival vest, and is large enough to support one person.

After demonstrating capability with the personal life raft, the crews simulated escaping from under a parachute — in the water. A training rig of a parachute, held in a spread-out position with PVC piping, was placed in the river. The Airmen had to navigate their way out from under it.



“This training aid teaches you how to get out from under a chute when it lands on top of you,” Speckman said. “You have to navigate your way out of that situation very carefully, or you could get tangled up in the parachute cords. That is not a situation you want to be in.”

Another situation was simulated in which the Airman lands in the water, and is dragged through the water by the parachute. This was done by dragging the aircrew members through the water from the back of a patrol boat.

This training method creates a realistic environment for the air crew.

“Very realistic,” said Technical Sgt. Justin Nettles. “We’ve gotten briefings from people who have had to use these skills, and our SERE guys got it just right.”

Aside from getting wet while fully clothed, and trying to swim in shoes, the least comfortable part of the training was boarding the 20-man life raft, according to Nettles. “It’s supposed to be able to fit 20 people in it, but it is tight. The lack of space would make it stressful,” he said.

The 20-man raft is used as a more stable rescue platform than the individual version. It provides greater visibility, and some protection from the elements.

After the rafts, and drags, and chutes, the rescue portion of the training got underway. Aircrew members were hoisted out of the river by helicopter and deposited on dry land. These extractions were accomplished by state troopers of the Alabama Department of Public Safety. Also providing support was the Montgomery Fire Department.

“The training we have this weekend meets not only requirements for our aircrew members, but also helps the Montgomery Police and Fire Departments and the Alabama Troopers with their training and proficiency,” Speckman said.

“We really appreciate their support and enjoy working with other professionals,” Speckman added.





## SERE, FROM PAGE 5

the operations group leadership.

"They have allowed me the freedom to create the most realistic training environment for aircrew members," he said. "Maximizing the realism of training increases the depth of learning students obtain."

The SERE field makes up a weapon system that primarily focuses on Personnel Recovery. Whenever any U.S. service member or foreign ally becomes separated from their unit during both war and peacetime, getting that person back to friendly forces is the SERE mission.

Not only do specialists take part in the planning and preparation for high-risk warfighters to go overseas, they also coordinate and execute recovery missions.

What SERE instructors teach are not everyday activities. To be effective, training must increase stress levels while inducing an emotional connection to the survival mission. This is done with the hope of reinforcing lessons learned during training.

There are a lot of rumors about what goes on at the six-month SERE School, located at Fairbanks AFB, Washington. It's one of the most difficult training courses in the military, with an incredibly high attrition rate.

Those rumors, according to Speckman, "are all true!"

To become a member of this highly demanding occupation, students spend most of their six months learning survival skills in several different environments called biomes (forest, desert, arctic, tropics, coastal and the ocean's open waters).

Skills became more refined as students enter each biome, survive its unique challenges and then move on. To graduate, students must overcome

## OH SAY CAN YOU SERE?

A SERE Specialist shall:

- ◆ Conduct operations around the world preparing aircrew and high-risk-of-isolation personnel to 'Return with Honor' from any type of survival situation;
- ◆ Train in all major climatic conditions: arctic, desert, tropical, ocean and temperate;
- ◆ Complete intense training in the following areas:
  - wilderness living
  - shelter construction
  - fire building
  - backpacking
  - escape and evasion
  - conduct after capture
  - map & compass navigation
  - wilderness medicine and first aid
  - signaling and rescue techniques
  - food, water procurement
  - techniques for training others



a series of seemingly impossible challenges.

For Speckman, the most difficult was the constant deterioration of his physical condition. He said it was a process that's difficult to explain to anyone who hasn't experienced such a brutal combination of exhaustion and pain, both mental and physical.

"During our time in the field we were provided a minimal amount of food and tasked to work for approximately 20 hours per day. There may have been a night or two we didn't see

sleep," he said.

The days soon turn into weeks, and over time, every step taken is a reminder of the difficult training students volunteer for.

"You start to wonder if your ruck is getting heavier, if the mountains are getting taller, and the distance is getting farther," Speckman explained. "At this point, a number of people have quit and those that remain are feeling great despair. You stop counting how many weeks you have left. Every day the sun falls is a feeling of success, and we hoped that time would stop."

"Every morning our bodies ached, our stomachs were empty and our feet were swollen, but our faces were expressionless because we refused to give in, refused to quit, refused to fail."

Speckman believes his experience, his faith, and his SERE teammate will help him accomplish his mission here at the 908th.

"God has allowed me to experience the process of designing, creating, altering, and executing a SERE program. Rather than the unit benefitting from me, I am greatly benefiting from this unit."

# HOT FUN IN THE ALABAMA SUN



The temperature had already climbed past the 90-degree mark by 9 a.m., but the heat faced by firefighters of the 908th Civil Engineer Squadron made the summer sun pale in comparison. Wing firefighters completed their annual aircraft live-fire training requirement during the July UTA.

"It was hot out there, but our guys knocked out the training despite the heat," said Chief Master Sergeant Alexander Pelaez, Fire Chief of the 908th Fire Department. "Members had the opportunity to work with the Airport Rescue Fire Fighting Vehicles, and a newer piece of equipment, the P-34 Rapid Intervention Vehicle. The 908th Fire Department works hand in hand with the 42nd Fire Department during this training event. Most of our members in the 908th are also civilian firefighters on the outside. However, they primarily work structural firefighting and don't have much of an opportunity to practice on a large-frame aircraft for crash rescue firefighting. Several members were able to work on their upgrade training requirements during this event."





## New to the 908th

Maj. Peter Mask, 25 APS	Senior Airman Tiana McLean, MSG
Maj. Robert McNulty, MXS	Senior Airman Deloise Reeder, FSS
Tech. Sgt. Toni Page, 357 AS	Airman First Class Larry Ellis, CES
Staff Sgt. Marcus Hall, MXS	Airman First Class Steven Julien, 25 APS
Staff Sgt. Thomas Meadows, SFS	Airman First Class Tyler Bowland, AMXS
Staff Sgt. Brandon Wilson, AMXS	Airman Basic Joshua Colin, ASTS
Staff Sgt. Daniel Westerfield, LRS	

## Preparing to Disembark

Lt. Col. Kevin W. Greeley, OSS	Master Sgt. Brandy H. Lindsey, ASTS
Lt. Col. Gwendolyn C. Hill, ASTS	Master Sgt. Jeffery Speigner, CES
Senior Master Sgt. Jamie L. Womack, MXS	Tech. Sgt. Michael L. Epps, OSS
Master Sgt. Joseph C. Denman, FSS	Tech. Sgt. Hollis E. Vernetti, AES
Master Sgt. Dennis Ellis, CES	Staff Sgt. Anthony M. Simpson
Master Sgt. David G. Greer, 25 APS	

\* The next Reserve Retirement Briefing is set to take place Aug. 1 at 9 a.m. at Building 903, the MSG Conference Room.\*

## CAREER, FROM PAGE 3

reviews it and offers guidance on your next career move. You than will have a snapshot of what it will take to meet your career goals. Take it from someone who knows — go to the vPC website — fill out your R-ODP or R-EDP and give yourself a road map to a rewarding Air Force career!

### CAREER ALPHABETICS

ALS - Airman Leadership School  
CCAF - Community College of the Air Force  
IDE - Intermediate Developmental Education, Air Command and Staff College  
LTT - Leadership Today and Tomorrow  
NCOA - Non-Commissioned Officer's Academy  
OTS - Officer Training School  
PME - Professional Military Education  
R-EDP - Reserve Enlisted Development Plan  
R-ODP - Reserve Officer Development Plan  
RSSB - Reserve School Selection Board  
SDE - Senior Developmental Education, Air War College  
SNCO - Senior Non-Commissioned Officer's Academy  
SOC - Squadron Officer College



### Master Sergeant



Anthony W. Lewis  
Paul M. McGowan

### Technical Sergeant



Tracey E. Adams  
Jonathan D. Anguilli  
Gary T. Broaden  
Daniel R. Daley  
Jeffery L. Davis  
Monica Lorenzo  
William A. Mateikat

### Staff Sergeant



Gregory M. Bush  
Michael E. Caldwell  
Aaron M. Coggin  
Paige M. Harris  
Dwayne Lee Jr.  
David H. Patrick  
Cody K. Speckman  
John P. Stephenson  
Caleb B. Toney

### Senior Airman



Rashad N. Campbell  
Trevon D. Mingo

### Airman First Class



Avian J. Shine

### Airman



Jasmine K. McNeal

## ALS RECOGNIZES ALABAMA RESERVIST

By Gene H. Hughes  
908th AW Public Affairs

Senior Airman Jamaar Jackson, a Client Systems Technician with the 908th FSS, recently distinguished himself while attending Airman Leadership School at Little Rock Air Force Base, Ark.

During the graduation ceremony, he received the Leadership Award for the class, one of the two prestigious awards presented to graduates.

Col. Craig Drescher, former 908th member and present commander of the 913 Airlift Group at Little Rock AFB presented the six AFRC ALS students of Class 15-06 their graduation certificates.

"It is my understanding that this was the first ALS class at Little Rock AFB open to Reservists not from the local area," he said. "I learned there were a couple of 908th personnel here a few weeks ago when I came dragging into the flight planning room after a night flight ... to find the class using the briefing tables to study and prepare for their classes. The entire staff commented that the Reservists 'wowed the whole staff,' and 'completely blew us away.'"

"It was a big night for AFRC. All six reservists presented themselves with impeccable military bearing and were wonderful to visit with," Drescher said. "Senior Airman Jackson emceed part of the ceremony and did a wonderful job. "Master Sgt. Pettway and Technical Sgt. Talley drove all the way from Maxwell to support their co-workers also."



Col. Christopher Bennett (far left), 19th Airlift Wing Vice Commander, along with Chief Master Sgt. Rhonda Buening (far right), 19th AW Command Chief and Master Sgt. Jason Crouse, 19th Security Forces Squadron First Sergeant. (left), congratulate Senior Airman Jamaar Jackson during the graduation ceremony. (Air Force Photo/Senior Airman Scott Poe)

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TO THE FAMILY OF:

### Wing's 56ers will sponsor Nutrition Symposium

The 908th Airlift Wing 56ers Organization will sponsor a Nutrition Symposium, for all Airmen, E1 to E4.

**WHEN: Sunday, Aug. 2, 1030 - 1130 a.m.**

**WHERE: Hoover Auditorium, OTS**

The purpose of a comprehensive Airman fitness program is to build and sustain a thriving and resilient Air Force community that fosters mental, physical, social, and spiritual fitness.

According to the Wingman Toolkit, physical fitness is probably the most obvious of the four components of comprehensive well being. Physical domain is the ability to adopt and sustain healthy behaviors needed to enhance health and wellness. Finding the time to exercise is a challenge, as is planning and preparing healthy meals and getting all the rest your body needs.

## TRAVEL, FROM PAGE 3

and let them know you have a returned travel voucher.

### Payment Process Steps after Supervisor approval:

3. Voucher has been received and logged: the FSO will review the voucher for accuracy, signatures, receipts and orders. If all is correct they will forward to AFFSC.

4. Voucher has been assigned to the examiner: AFFSC will have a reviewer and auditor examine your travel voucher before it is paid. It is taking about 30 days for vouchers to process through this system.

5. Voucher awaiting approval: payment amount has been calculated and is almost ready. First, it must finish flowing through our systems in order to be released for payment. Once approved, the payment system will release the funds.

6. Voucher released for payment: payment was approved and released by AFFSC. Allow some time for your payment to be reflected in your Electronic Fund Transfer (EFT) account and payment to your GTC card.

If you have any questions about this process, contact your unit orderly room. Then, if additional assistance is required, contact the 908th FM at (334) 953-6722.