

# RABBIT TALES



THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE 513TH AIR CONTROL GROUP



Plus: Family Day 2011 Photos | Thumper/Okie Recap | Characters Welcome

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*All photographs are Air Force photographs unless otherwise indicated.*

## 513 ACG ASSUMPTION OF COMMAND

Colonel Jeffrey J. McGalliard will assume command of the 513th Air Control Group on Oct. 1 at 0900 in the Tinker Club's main ballroom.



Major General Frank Padilla, the 10th Air Force Commander, will be the presiding officer.

Col. McGalliard most recently served as the Chief of Nuclear Operations and Operations Plans and Readiness divisions at Air Force Reserve Headquarters, Robins Air Force Base, Ga. He had been stationed at Robins AFB since July of 2006.

As a command pilot, he has flown missions in support of Operations DESERT STORM, ENDURING FREEDOM and IRAQI FREEDOM in the KC-135 Stratotanker and C-141 Starlifter.

## THIS UTA IN HISTORY

Oct 1, 1908 — The first production Model T Ford was completed at the company's Piquette Avenue plant in Detroit. Between 1908 and 1927, Ford would build some 15 million Model T cars. It was the longest production run of any automobile model in history until the Volkswagon Beetle surpassed it in 1972.

Oct 2, 1950 — Peanuts, a syndicated daily and Sunday American comic strip written and illustrated by Charles M. Schulz, which ran from Oct. 2, 1950, to Feb. 13, 2000. The strip is considered to be one of the most popular and influential in the history of the medium, with 17,897 strips published in all. At its peak, Peanuts ran in over 2,600 newspapers, with a readership of 355 million in 75 countries, and was translated into 21 languages.

Oct 2, 1968 — St. Louis Cardinals pitcher Bob Gibson strikes out 17 Detroit Tigers in the first game of the World Series, breaking Sandy Koufax's record for the most strikeouts in a Series game. Though the Cards ended up losing the Series in seven games, Gibson pitched three and struck out an unprecedented 35 batters.

## 513 MXS GETS NEW COMMANDER

by Senior Airman Caleb Wanzer  
*Public Affairs Specialist*

Maj. Justin Franklin assumed command of the 513th Maintenance Squadron from Maj. Stephen Simko Sep. 10 in an early morning ceremony presided by Col. Stephen Seaman, former commander of the 513 ACG.

Maj. Franklin transferred from the active duty side in Oct. 2006 and became the Maintenance Operations Officer for the 513 MXS. After receiving command last month, he said his first order of business is to get to know the unit members.

"I want to be their strongest advocate for all of the great work and effort that they put forth every day," Maj. Franklin said.

Commanding the 513 MXS has been the highlight of his career, Maj. Simko said during the change of command ceremony.

"I am proud to be able to say I was a part of the 513th during my career and look forward to hearing the great things that the air control group does in the future," he said.

Maj. Simko accepted a position as an Individual Mobilization Augmentee with the 100th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, RAF Mildenhall, England.



*Col. Stephen Seaman presents the 513 MXS guidon to Maj. Justin Franklin on Sep. 10. Before being selected for command, Maj. Franklin was the Maintenance Operations Officer for the 513 MXS.*

## FAMILY DAY 2011



Above left: Staff Sgt. Benjamin and Staff Sgt. Misty Ackiss relax with Josiah, their son, during the family day held at the 38th Engineering Installation Group.



Above right: Lt. Col. Matthew Conrad presents Col. Stephen Seaman with a farewell gift from the 970 AACCS.

Right: Chief Master Sgt. Michael Sulanke presents Maj. Stephen Simko with a "tail," a farewell gift from the 513th MXS and AMXS.

Bottom: 513th members, family members, and friends play volleyball on the sand courts at the 38th EIG.



## CHARACTERS WELCOME

by Lt. Col. Matthew Conrad  
Commander, 970 AACCS

There are many facets to what make this squadron the best AWACS unit in existence. Most people, if pressed for one word to describe our unit, will come up with "experience".

While experience is a vital component and an accurate description, I think there is more to it than that. I would contend that in any winning organization there are three main factors—the people, the training, and the ability and desire to "take care of the little things".

In this installment, I would like to talk to you about the first and undoubtedly the most important component—the people. That's us—all of us. While there are many different reasons for folks to join the Air Force Reserve, (compensation, retirement at age 60, patriotism, a great hobby—or a combination of all), all of us have accepted the proposition that with

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time ARTs, keep this organization well-honed and ensure all of us get our training. The other 70 percent of our fellow squadron mates (TRs) can show up once a month for a long weekend, take a couple of trips a year and voila! A superior organization.

"Impossible," you say. "Nope," I say. That is the essence of what it means to be a Reservist. But you then reply, "Boss, that is only possible through our vast experience." To which I would reply, "True, but experience alone does not make it happen."

Primarily, it is the people that make it happen. It takes a special person to agree to give up a weekend a month to maintain their proficiency at the top of their game. That is what the 970th does—ALL of us, both TR and ART. It is our legacy. We do not accept less.

From A1C to Lt Col, we as a squadron expect a sound level of performance and we demand it from ourselves and each other. This is the most important



aspect that typifies someone in our squadron—professionalism.

There is no doubt that our squadron is made up of the most eclectic group of individuals ever assembled in AWACS. To steal a phrase from the USA television network, "Characters Welcome". We don't need perfect people, just folks who are dedicated to the above proposition and who have the willingness to make it happen.

With that said, we, the 970th, are ALWAYS on the lookout for good folks that would make a good fit. We may have an incredible opportunity to hire outstanding folks as the active duty forces continue to draw down and force shape. I need you folks to be our ambassadors. We, the big Air Force, cannot afford to lose a valuable, well trained asset. I, as well as you, could easily give anyone leaving active duty several reasons to consider continuing their service with us in the 970th.

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If you know of anyone that is professional enough to wear the Thumper patch, please bring them over. I would love the opportunity to explain to them why they need to be in the finest unit in the Air Force. If they are a good fit—this is undoubtedly the place they need to be.

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## UNIT PHOTOS

The unit photographs taken last UTA have been released and are available on the 513 ACG Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/513thAirControlGroup](http://www.facebook.com/513thAirControlGroup)), or by contacting the 513 ACG/PA office via email ([513acg.publicaffairs@tinker.af.mil](mailto:513acg.publicaffairs@tinker.af.mil)).



## WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

### Colonel Lee Alexander, Retired

Last Position in the 513 ACG:  
Commander, 970 AACCS

Time in the 513 ACG:  
Sep. 1998 — Jun. 2003



Chiefs of Staff to take all the PACAF AWACS and pull them back to bases in the Pacific. According to the plan, the 970th would be the single command and control platform for all actions north of Baghdad, but we had just lost half of our crews and two of the five aircraft. The leadership of the 513th and 970th had to do some very last-minute planning to use another airfield that was initially not even suitable for AWACS operations, and tell higher headquarters exactly what we could do with 50 percent of our initially planned resources. The first few days of Iraqi Freedom were flown by the

970th with two jets, two crews, two crew chiefs, and no spare parts. On the fourth day, extra maintenance personnel arrived from Tinker along with 20 aircrews from the 552 ACW to provide relief for our very thin crews. These active duty crewmembers had just completed training and were too “green” to deploy with the 552 ACW. We put them with our crews, and could not have done the job without them. In the end, with 50 percent of the aircraft and crews and very limited spare parts, the 970th covered more than 80 percent of the 24/7 coverage. The Commander, 15th AF personally credited our crews, along with the tankers and JSTARS based with us, with saving 5 Special Forces units from being overrun and destroyed. To command troops who displayed that level of professionalism and dedication was the high mark of a 28 year career.

- Do you have any advice for current members?

Plans are nothing but a place to begin deviating from. Plans are important, both in your personal life and in the military, but do not get too attached to them. The greatest opportunities I have had in my life came from the total destruction of some of my best plans. I mourned the loss of those plans for too long. That attitude is a waste of time. When I began to see what life had left me, in each case, I found good things that were too unusual for me to plan for. Things that were better, in some cases, than I could ask for. When things go south, in your professional as well as personal life, put your faith in the people around you. In the 513th Air Control Group, that faith won't be misplaced.

Col. Alexander (Ret.) now lives in Shreveport, La.

- Are you working now?

I am currently a contracting employee of Science Applications International Corp. I have about 8 to 10 jobs a year where I travel all over the country to various Air National Guard bases and assess their flight safety programs. It's very “part-time” and I am mostly retired.

- What was one of the biggest challenges you faced while assigned to the 513 ACG?

The biggest challenge I faced while at the 513th was the situation immediately following the September 11th attacks. The 552 was spinning up as fast as it could to deploy to multiple theaters with limited aircraft and crews. I was on loan to the 552 and working in their OG's office while most of their leadership was deployed. Of the five deployment plans that were being considered, none of them included the 970th as an independent unit, and none included 970th leadership. I needed to find a plan that would satisfy the active duty leadership, take enough “off their plate” and allow the 970th to maintain unit integrity. I had to “sell” this plan and convince all the players that it would work. The plan was essentially to deploy half the squadron and leave the other half to fly domestic Noble Eagle missions, and to do this indefinitely. How to execute the plan, to have 100% of the personnel involved in a mission and to allow crew swaps was something the 970th had to figure out on the fly and they were very imaginative with their solutions!

- What is your favorite memory of the 513th?

In the spring of 2003, when it became clear we would attack Iraq, Turkey decided not to allow U.S. troops to use their country to stage the attack. This meant all of our planning to use Incirlik as a base for our aircraft would have to change. Also, North Korea took provocative actions that caused the Joint

## IN THE SPOTLIGHT



### Senior Master Sgt. David Brunsmann

Unit: 513th Maintenance Squadron

Job Title: Equipment Maintenance Flight Chief. I currently supervise the AGE, Sheet metal, Metals Tech and Repair and Reclamation shops.

Hometown: Walnut, Iowa.

Place I'd Like to Visit: Australia and New Zealand.

Favorite Part of My Job: The satisfaction of helping others successfully progress in their military careers.

Biggest Pet Peeve: When people procrastinate tasks that need to be accomplished.

Little Known Fact About Me: I design, install and service saltwater reef aquariums around the local area.

Favorite Memory from Your Time in the 513th: It would definitely be being promoted to Senior Master Sgt.



### Tech. Sgt. Crystel Doty

Unit: 513th Operations Support Flight

Job Title: Unit Training Manager

Hometown: Tacoma, Washington

Place I'd Like to Visit: I would love to visit the Louvre in Paris, France. Hopefully the hubby reads this and surprises me with a vacation. :)

Favorite Part of My Job: Meeting new people.

Biggest Pet Peeve: People not reading my emails; sometimes I do have important things to say!

Little Known Fact About Me: I'm a complete goofball.

Favorite Memory from Your Time in the 513th: Believe it or not, it has to be the activation.

To suggest someone to be featured in the next issue, email [513acg.publicaffairs@tinker.af.mil](mailto:513acg.publicaffairs@tinker.af.mil).

# SECAF SPEAKS ON RETIREMENT, BENEFITS

by David Larter

Staff Writer, Air Force Times

The Air Force's top civilian promised airmen Monday that he will fight for pay and benefits that will keep the service competitive and assured them that their retirement plan would not be changed even though an overhaul of the system probably is coming.

Secretary Michael Donley told a ballroom full of airmen and defense industry representatives that attracting and keeping top-notch airmen remains a top priority for the Air Force even as it is wrestling with how to cut its budget. Already, the service has trimmed \$4.5 billion for the coming fiscal year; the amount of the 2012 budget should come in at about \$166.4 billion.

But Donley was upfront about the need to get personnel costs, including retirement pay, under control; pay and benefits make up 40 percent of the Air Force budget.

"Our obligation to those who serve is to ensure that the compensation and benefits they earn are sustainable over the long haul," Donley told the crowd in the first speech of the Air Force Association's fall meeting in National Harbor, Md., a suburb of Washington. "Any potential changes to our military retirement system must be carefully considered to make sure we retain the highly motivated and experienced workforce necessary to execute the Air Force mission."

Donley repeated a pledge by Defense Secretary Leon Panetta to grandfather today's retirement plan for troops now serving.

The secretary acknowledged that many airmen are on edge because of all the talk on Capitol Hill about cuts to pay and benefits, talk that he thinks has scared airmen unnecessarily.

"While it would benefit no one to downplay the hard choices that confront us," he said, "neither should we paint a picture that is so bleak that our service members fear that the nation is turning its back on [them]."

Regarding end strength, Donley strongly suggested that the force could shrink as the Air Force modernizes its fleet but not by so much that career fields and capabilities would be hollowed out.

"If [the force] is too small, we could unintentionally drive some mission areas and career fields to unsustainably low levels, lose the flexibility to accommodate new or evolving missions or risk or ability to sustain expeditionary operations."

Donley also addressed a growing movement in Congress to cut overseas basing of U.S. troops. Fewer troops around the world would hurt readiness, Donley said.

"We are committed to maintaining an overseas presence that ensures regional stability, enables sustained engagement with ... security partners and supports the rapid response, global mobility and communications on which our joint force depends."

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## THUMPERS BEAT OKIES, RETAIN CRYSTAL CUP

by Lt. Col. Ralph Hawkins

Sports Contributor

For the fourth year in a row, the 513 ACG Thumpers have defeated the 507 ARW Okies to lay claim to and retain the fabled CRYSTAL CUP trophy – honoring the outstanding sports organization on the Tinker AFB Reserve campus.

With the Thumpers leading 4-1 in the season softball series, the Okies knew they had a tough road ahead of them – they would have to sweep the Thumpers in two double-headers before winter set in.

With the wind blowing in, there were no over-the-fence home runs hit. The 513th took game one 17-11, effectively ending the hopes for the 507th in the 2011 season.

For game two, the Thumpers lead 17-12 going into the bottom of the last inning, when the Okie bats came to life. The 507th scored six runs, including the winning run in their last at-bat, notching an 18-17 win over their rivals.

The 513th now leads the all-time series 44-41.



File Photo: 513 ACG Thumpers dated Sep. 26, 2008.