

May 2015

# RABBIT TAILS

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE 513TH TROOP

## CSAF speaks to Reservists

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**INSIDE:** Farewell from 970th commander // Airmen volunteer to honor AFR birthday

# RABBIT TALES

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*Rabbit Tales is a production of the 513th Air Control Group Public Affairs office.*

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

## 513TH UPDATE

### Upcoming events

Saturday – 1500 – 970th AACS Change of Command Ceremony (970th AACS Auditorium)

Saturday – 1630 – MXS/AMXS Softball (Tinker softball fields)

May 19 – TBA – Flag Football Playoffs (Tinker football field)

### Intramural sports update

Flag Football: Reserve White's football team is undefeated (7-0), Reserve Gold is 4-3 and Reserve Red is 2-5. The top four teams on base are set to play in a single-elimination playoff tournament May 19.

Thumper Softball: Softball begins June 11! Contact Master Sgt. Joe Brown in the 513th OSS Training Office (734-4324) for info on how to play.

### Promotions for May

Congrats to this month's promotees!

**Senior Airman Sheena Fixico**  
(513th Maintenance Squadron)

**Staff Sgt. Michael Carpenter**  
(513th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron)

**Staff Sgt. Joshua Dorsey**  
(513th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron)

**Staff Sgt. Kevin Harris**  
(513th Maintenance Squadron)

**Tech. Sgt. Robert Nelson**  
(513th Maintenance Squadron)

**Tech. Sgt. James Sharp**  
(970th Airborne Air Control Squadron)

**Senior Master Sgt. Jay Harris**  
(970th Airborne Air Control Squadron)

### Cover photo

More than 1,000 Guard and Reserve Airmen had the opportunity to listen to U.S. Air Force Chief of Staff Gen Mark A. Welsh III speak April 11 about key issues affecting the Air Force. (U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Caleb Wanzer/Released)



### Fit to Fight hall of fame



**Team Tinker**

**513th ACG**



#### 1.5-Mile Run

Men: **7:51** **8:57** Men: TSgt Daniel McDonald  
Women: **9:44** **12:07** Women: TSgt Krystal Stalder

#### Pushups

Men: **110** **82** Men: SrA Robert Duncan  
Women: **65** **48** Women: 1st Lt. Lily Baker

#### Situps

Men: **109** **92** Men: 1st Lt. Michael Doughty  
Women: **84** **63** Women: 1st Lt. Amie Inman

#### 1-Mile Walk

Men & Women: **9:15** **11:22** Men: MSgt Darrell Freel  
**13:57** Women: MSgt Elizabeth Staff



# Change as a constant

## Farewell from the 970th AACS Commander

By Lt. Col. Brent D. Vander Pol  
*Commander, 970th AACS*

It seems with each passing day some new change jumps out in front of our Air Force lives. The current budget, global threats, a changing force and Total Force Integration are just a few that come to mind. You can walk down just about any hallway and hear the conversations about how this or that is going to change and how that is going to affect us. I am as guilty as anyone of looking ahead and trying to figure out what this all means.

I have decided that my time would probably be better spent on the things that really never change. The Air Force I joined in 1985 was big and blue and it flew around in a world that was chock full of commies. The Soviet threat drove both the size and mission of that Air Force, so when the Soviet Union finally collapsed under the weight of its' own immorality, the Air Force changed too. We weren't as big, but still just as blue. The Strategic Air Command, a bastion of cold war doctrine, went away and our focus shifted to the changing shape of the Middle East. Desert Shield and Storm showed the world the dominance of air power as they watched precision

weapons destroy targets on television. The end of that conflict made our Air Force change again. The accuracy and precision of air power meant that we could probably adjust our force and still meet the threats we faced.



We got smaller. We moved forces, closed bases and became more expeditionary in nature. We spent a lot of time babysitting a Middle-Eastern dictator. We enforced resolutions and sanctions. We stood up for oppressed people in the Balkans and adjusted our tactics and strategy to deal with smaller conflicts. September 11, 2001, forever changed America and our Air Force.

We patrolled our homeland and beefed up security at bases here

and abroad. We finally finished what Saddam Hussein started. We became even more expeditionary and deployed to provide freedom to people who had not known it for quite some time. As the curtains begin to fall on the Afghan war, we are left to wonder what will happen next. I am quite certain that what will happen is that some things are going to change.

You see, the constant thing in my career has been change itself. So what should you do, 970th? Focus on the things that have never changed in all that time.

During all that time and change the Air Force was ready. When we were needed, we were ready. As a flying unit, **YOUR WHOLE PURPOSE IS TO GET YOUR PLANES IN THE AIR WITH PEOPLE IN THEM WHO KNOW WHAT THEY ARE DOING.**

That is the same thing that was expected of the Army Air Corps and it has not changed to this day.

Keep those two things your primary focus. There are many things you have to do, but none of them are ever going to be as important as those two. I am very proud of you. I am grateful for your support and friendship. I am quite certain that the 970th future is very bright. Thanks for NOT sucking!

# CSAF talks with Guard, Reserve component at Tinker



**By Maj. Jon Quinlan**

*507th Air Refueling Wing Public Affairs*

Over 1,000 Guard and Reserve Airmen had the opportunity to listen to U.S. Air Force Chief of Staff Gen Mark A. Welsh III speak April 11 about key issues affecting the Air Force.

After visiting the active duty and civilian force April 8-10, General Welsh and his wife, Betty, extended their visit to Tinker by half a day so they could meet with the Airmen of the 507th Air Refueling Wing, 513th Air Control Group and Oklahoma Air National Guard's 137th ARW during their April Unit Training Assemblies.

Speaking to Oklahoma Air Reserve Component Airmen, the general outlined three things all Airmen need to focus on: common sense, communication and compassion for each other.

"We've got to make sure common sense is the first standard we apply, all the time," General Welsh said. "If you have an instruction, a policy or a tech order that doesn't

align with common sense, then all those other things are wrong. Let's change them. And we can. We just gotta think we can."

The general also explained how critical communication is for the force, especially with so many changes in defense being planned and discussed.

"The bottom line is that we have to be able to communicate to each other about what's going on, whether it's about sequestration, whether it's retirement plan recommendations, health care or whatever it may be that's happening," General Welsh said.

The Air Force chief of staff spoke about the importance of Airmen caring more. Airmen already care about their duties, but they need to care more across the board to get the performance that guarantees a war-winning capability, the general said.

"The people in our unit and families that help us do this job, they're the best people on earth," Welsh said. "It's impossible to care too much about them."

Along with his message, the general told the Guard and Reserve audience that his main purpose of the visit was to say thanks.

*(Continued on next page.)*

Lt. Col. Curt Andersen, an air battle manager assigned to the 970th Airborne Air Control Squadron, asks Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Mark Welsh a question about the mix of active and reserve Airmen on April 11 at Tinker Air Force Base. (U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Caleb Wanzer)



“Thanks for who you are,” General Welsh said. “Thanks for the work you’ve been doing around the world since the day you walked into our service and thanks for the things you continue to do to make life better for other people.”

Guard and Reserve Airmen in the crowd took the opportunity to ask the Air Force’s top uniformed leader several questions regarding the future force structure and reliance on the ARC in the future.

The general said the service is close to achieving the right mix between Guard, Reserve and active duty after analytical reviews and changes in the force. With the current resource-constrained environ-

ment, the Air Force is looking to move more hardware and, in some cases, people, to the Guard and Reserve.

“When we can be more efficient and keep the same operational responsiveness and capability, why wouldn’t we?” General Welsh said. “So the guidance from the beginning has been, whatever we can push to the Reserve component, we’re going to do it.”

Before the all call, the general and his wife spent time listening to Guard and Reserve Airmen and key spouses personally tell them their individual stories.

“I just had the incredible privilege of sitting with a bunch of Airmen

here and learn a little bit about their stories,” General Welsh said. “The incredible things that have happened to them, what they’ve accomplished, make them unique. Everyone in this hangar has a story, and the story is uniquely you. Some of them are uplifting, some of them are sad. Some of them are inspirational. But each one is unique ... so I ask you to please learn the stories.”

Airmen overwhelmingly appreciated the opportunity to tell their stories and listen to the message.

“He is truly concerned about the well-being of each and every Airman in the Air Force,” said Senior Master Sgt. Mike Johnson, 137th Maintenance Squadron.



**Technical Sergeant Robert Nelson**

**Unit:** 513th Maintenance Squadron

**Job title:** Fuel System Repair

**Hometown:** Norman

**Civilian Job?** Explosive Safety, U.S. Army

**What did you want to be when you grew up?**

Good question. I think it was a firefighter.

**Little-known fact about you:** I spent my high-school years going to school in Geneva, Switzerland. My mom worked for the World Health Organization at the time.

**Best part of your job:** For my civilian job, being able to travel and work with explosives. For my Reserve job, it would be being around the aircraft.

**If you had superhero ability, it would be:**

X-Ray vision would be fun.

**What animal best represents you?**

I’m kind of lost on this one. I’m going with the rat, since the rat is my animal from the Chinese calendar.



**Senior Airman Stephen Tritten**

**Unit:** 970th Airborne Air Control Squadron

**Job title:** Aerial Surveillance Technician

**Hometown:** Oklahoma City

**Civilian Job?** Network Operations, Love’s Travel Stops and Country Stores

**What did you want to be when you grew up?**

A musician

**Little-known fact about you:** I’ve stepped foot on every continent but Antarctica.

**Favorite team:** Nebraska Cornhuskers

**Favorite memory from your time in the 513th?** RIMPAC 2014

**If you had superhero ability, it would be:**

Invisibility. You can’t shoot what you don’t see.

**What animal best represents you?**

Bald friggin’ Eagle. ‘MURICA!

# Reservists give back in honor of Air Force Reserve's birthday

By Staff Sgt. Caleb Wanzer

513th Air Control Group Public Affairs

Twenty-five reservists from the 513th Air Control Group and the 507th Air Refueling Wing here started their Sunday morning early to celebrate the 67th birthday of the Air Force Reserve by volunteering for the Oklahoma City Memorial Marathon.

Master Sgt. Alphonzo Glover, an accessories flight chief with the 513th Maintenance Squadron, didn't let the fact that he just returned from a six-month deployment to Southwest Asia keep him from helping out. Glover has volunteered as a course marshal eight times with the marathon since 2004.

"It's just an awesome vibe out here," he said. "It's a small way that we at Tinker can give back to the community."

For Glover, seeing all of the runners overcome obstacles to complete their goals inspires his own fitness goals.

"I just saw an eight year-old kid running a half marathon," he said. "If that's not motivation for you, I don't know what is. It kind of makes

the mile and a half test seem pretty trivial."

The group met well before sunrise to prepare for the day. Takesha Williams, a budget analyst with the 507th Force Support Squadron and the organizer for the reservist volunteers, started passing out course marshal vests and flags about 5:30 a.m.

"The volunteers motivate me to come out here, their excitement and enthusiasm," she said. "I've been doing this for about a decade, sometimes we have less volunteers, sometimes we have more, but they keep me coming back."

The course marshals spread out along the route, usually two to an intersection to keep vehicles at bay and assist the runners if necessary, Williams said.

The 25 reservists covered from mile six to the middle of mile seven of the route, which included Gorilla Hill, a popular spot of the race for community members to show their support. The hill was lined with supporters dressed in banana costumes



handing out pieces of fruit as well as an inflatable gorilla and a local radio station van blaring music.

Beyond all of the excitement, Williams knows that spending time helping others is an important part of being in the local community.

"I think volunteering is important, whether you're a reservist or not," she said. "It's an opportunity to give back to the community that

Oklahoma City Memorial Marathon volunteers from the 513th Air Control Group and 507th Air Refueling Wing at Tinker Air Force Base pose for a photo April 26 after the run in Oklahoma City. The reservists helped by diverting traffic and keeping the route safe. (U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Caleb Wanzer)

has provided so much for us for the duration of our lifetimes. Part of the core of being a human being is volunteering."

Williams said the volunteers were proud to honor the establishment of the Air Force Reserve by helping out.

"It's just another great reason to get out and serve those around us," she said.

The Air Force Reserve was created on April 14, 1948, by President Harry S. Truman, seven months after the active-duty Air Force was established as a separate service. Now numbering around 70,000 Airmen, the reserve is involved in nearly every Air Force mission including air refueling and airborne warning and control.

# Air Force provides additional support in Nepal



U.S. Air Force Airmen offload relief supplies for victims of the Nepal earthquake from a USAF C-17 Globemaster III April 28, 2015. (U.S. Air Force photo/Airman 1st Class Taylor Queen)

## By Master Sgt. Lesley Waters

*Secretary of the Air Force Public Affairs*

The Air Force continues its support of the disaster relief operations in Nepal with the arrival of a second C-17 Globemaster III in response to an earthquake that rocked the country April 25.

“One of the U.S. Air Force’s great strengths is our ability to provide rapid global mobility in support of humanitarian efforts around the world, and we are proud to be able to contribute our strengths to this recovery effort,” said Gen. Darren McDew, the Air Mobility Command commander.

The 7.9-magnitude earthquake has reportedly left more than 4,000 dead and thousands more still missing. In addition, thousands of people

are currently reported to be without food, water or shelter.

“Whenever and wherever our Air Force is needed, Airmen are ready to answer the call,” said Secretary of the Air Force Deborah Lee James. “Our Airmen are proud to deliver critical humanitarian relief and comfort to others during a time of need.”

The first Air Force C-17 delivered 70 personnel, including a US-AID Disaster Assistance Response Team, the Fairfax County Urban Search and Rescue team and several journalists, along with 45 square tons of cargo. The second aircraft, carrying approximately 50 passengers, included a Los Angeles urban search and rescue team, working dogs and additional relief supplies.

“With humanitarian relief opera-

tions, there is always a tremendous spirit of cooperation and support,” said Chief of Staff of the Air Force Gen. Mark A. Welsh III. “The Air Force is able to use its global reach and partner with other agencies to deliver timely assistance. Our Airmen continue to make me proud.”

Prior to the earthquake, 26 DOD personnel and one U.S. C-130 Hercules were already in Nepal to conduct a previously scheduled training exercise. All DOD personnel in Nepal are accounted for. A DOD team is helping the Nepal Army at Ratna Park set up tents for those displaced by earthquake damage, as well as using their medical training and working with the Nepal Army to assess and treat the wounded.