

507th Air Refueling Wing and 513th Air Control Group, U.S. Air Force Reserve

December 2012

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On-final

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Awards Banquet



Perfection



Homecoming



AFRC commander sends holiday season note



Lt. Gen. James F. Jackson
Commander of Air Force Reserve Command

ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga. – Greetings!

From Afghanistan and global operations to Hurricane Sandy relief efforts and homeland support, our Air Force Reserve continues to demonstrate excellence. Thank you all for everything you've done this past year.

As we celebrate this holiday season, please remember to focus on your family and the important folks around you. We all work hard during the year, so please make sure you take the time to enjoy your loved ones. Also, please remember those in harm's way and offer a hand to those who are separated from their families.

Looking forward to the New Year, I want to share my three focus areas:

Remember the Fight – Today's and Tomorrow's. The Total Force Team is still in high demand by Combatant Commanders around the world. Our mission is to be a reliable, accessible combat-ready force. Now, through recent

legislative changes, we may be called upon to help communities in our country affected by natural disaster or emergency. No matter when or where our nation needs us, we are ready to serve and will answer the call.

Adapt the Force. The Air Force Reserve is an integrated member of the Total Force Team. As we look to the future, we need to have a holistic view of the right Air Force capability mix. We need to remain flexible, yet focused, and be able to adapt to the changing Department of Defense and National Military Strategy.

Develop the Team. Force development is vital to a quality Air Force Reserve. Growing our future leaders today ensures we remain a superior combat force tomorrow.

I look forward to serving with you in the New Year. Happy Holidays and thanks for all you do.

Communicating the AF Reserve Mission with the help of Social Media

Capt. Jon Quinlan
507th Air Refueling Wing, Public Affairs

The ways that we communicate have changed drastically over the last few years. From the telegram to social media sites like Instagram, new online and emerging technologies have given us opportunities to communicate with ease. New social media mediums such as Facebook, Twitter or YouTube, which are now allowed in the Air Force, help us all communicate our Air Force Reserve mission. Harnessing these tools is now not just the role of Public Affairs but a responsibility for all Airman. But remember, while we provide information via social media it must be done carefully.

Airmen and Department of Defense civilians must protect sensitive information and ensure our network is secure and avoid revealing any information that could cause harm to our Air Force resources according to Gen. C. Robert Kehler,

the Air Force Space Command commander.

"All Airmen must take appropriate operational security measures," said General Kehler. "Commanders and supervisors must do their part by providing good leadership and oversight to ensure all personnel conduct themselves professionally; and ensure each Airman understands their personal responsibility to observe applicable rules of engagement for appropriate social media use."

I truly believe social media is a great tool, especially for Air Force Reservists. While we must be careful what we share, I strongly encourage Reservists to actively get involved in social media and tell your Air Force story to family, friends, and coworkers. If you ever have a question on what you can and cannot talk about, please contact us in the Public Affairs Office. Every Airman can be a spokesman for the Air Force Reserve.

I encourage all members to "like" the 507

ARW Facebook page. This site is a great way to get information about the wing, and share stories or photos.

"On-final" rises again

The "On-Final" newspaper has also changed throughout the years. A recent change in the way the Air Force provides internal information drove many hard copy newspapers to be discontinued. All articles were still published via official wing websites. While I agree with this modern way of providing information, I'm still a little old fashioned when it comes to the newspaper. So, we are bringing back your "On-Final" newspaper. Additionally, early next year we will provide you an actual hard copy edition of this newspaper free inside the "Tinker Take Off" base newspaper. Make sure to look for it early next year.

2013 UTA SCHEDULE

1-2 December

5-6 January

2-3 February

2-3 March

6-7 April

4-5 May

1-2 June



Master Sgt. Shaun Loeffler (center) accepts the Billy Hughes award from Col. Jeffrey Pickard, right and Gary Hughes, son of Billy Hughes. Each year the Billy Hughes award is given to a maintenance member of the 507 ARW or 513 ACG who best exemplifies the Air Force core values "Integrity First, Service Before Self and Excellence in All We Do." (Photo by Senior Airman Mark Hybers)

Why are we all just "Too Busy"

Chaplain (Capt.) John C. Weston
507th Air Refueling Wing Chaplain

"I'm too busy" we hear. "If you aren't too busy," some say. Business in our society is the new social currency. If you are busy, you are important.

No one knows this more than Reservists – as a chaplain friend of mine is fond of joking,

"Doing in 48 hours what it takes Active Duty 30 days to accomplish."

However, business is not all it's cracked up to be. When we seem to be too busy for others, we are prioritizing ourselves. We have to balance both our reserve time and our personal time to let people know they are important to us. If we give off the impression we are too busy for anyone, we isolate ourselves and withdraw from contact, finding ourselves disconnected and more than a little down because all of our human contact is inhuman contact – with e-mail, computer based

training (CBT's), and other fun Air Force stuff.

There is a worse issue underneath it all as well – too much business is actually bad time management. How can we be seen as efficient, capable NCOs and officers if we have no time or flexibility for anyone else? In the words of the mentor of a friend of mine,

"We have to make a plan we can deviate from."

Take time with your office staff or your co-workers to go to lunch from time to time. Have time to talk, be a wingman, and share what is going on in your life. Each UTA has its ups and downs, and we've all had times in which we only got a chance to breath in the car on the way home on Sunday. We must realize we are all human – especially those who are perpetually busy.

The old adage is, "If you need something done, ask a busy person."

Perhaps we need to change this perception so that we are open and accessible to everyone,



Chaplain (Capt.) John C. Weston

and not continually project the image that we are too busy just because it looks good to the outside world.

Transition Assistance Program mandatory for some Reservists

Some Reservists will be required to complete the Department of Defense Transition Assistance Program under legislation designed to reduce unemployment among veterans.

The updated Transition Assistance Program went into effect Nov. 21. It now requires mandatory pre-separation counseling, an individualized transition plan, VA benefits briefing and the Department of Labor employment workshop for all active-duty military members retiring or separating from the Air Force.

"Members of the Air Reserve Component on orders for 180 consecutive days or more are also now required to receive pre-separation counseling (to include an individualized transition plan) and receive a VA ben-

efits briefing," said Eddy Saunders, Air Force Reserve Command TAP program manager.

Reserve members are encouraged to participate in TAP services. However, the Office of the Secretary of Defense is reviewing an exemption that will allow Reservists to opt out of the DOL employment workshop if they already have a job or an education plan. "If members cannot provide proof, it will be mandatory that they also complete the TAP employment workshop," Saunders said.

Two pieces of legislation are driving changes to the program. The Veterans Opportunity to Work Act and Hiring Heroes Act directed the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Department of Labor and the Department of Defense to expand current programs

to reduce unemployment among veterans.

"The newly revised TAP will offer veterans the skills needed to explore education and employment opportunities, translate military skills and training and to receive individualized assistance to successfully register for the right VA benefits and services," added Krystal Shiver, AFRC's other TAP manager.

Reservists who need to fulfill TAP requirements should contact the Airman and Family Readiness office at their location. "Members on an active duty base will accomplish TAP requirements through the active duty Airman and Family Readiness center," Shiver said.

The Airman and Family Readiness office at Reserve installations will provide pre-separation counseling, determine exemptions and help Reservists schedule their DOL employment workshop attendance at a location closest to their home.

Reservists without an installation in their area can attend TAP services at the Airman and Family Readiness Center at Robins AFB, Ga., where AFRC has established a TAB hub.



AIRMEN IN TRANSITION
Program overhaul eases move to civilian life

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507th receives Lt. Gen. James E. Sherrard III Award

Tech. Sgt. Grady Epperly
507th Air Refueling Wing, Public Affairs

The 507th Air Refueling Wing is the 2012 Lieutenant General James E. Sherrard III award winner.

Each year the Airlift/Tanker Association recognizes those who have demonstrated superior leadership, made outstanding contributions to the airlift/tanker mission, and provided invaluable service to their civilian communities.

The award recognizes the Air Force Reserve Command outstanding Wing or Group contributing to the success of the Mobility Air Force Mission.

In its nomination package, the 507th Air Refueling Wing touched on a wide variety of topics, demonstrating why it is deserving of the award.

Among the strengths of the wing is its maximum degree of professionalism. Aircrew and maintenance achieved an impressive 6,108 flying hours, supporting 1,593 sorties; in worldwide mobility efforts, including Operations ENDURING FREEDOM, UNIFIED PROTECT, NEW DAWN and ODYSSEY DAWN, in concert with the United Nations.

“The men and women of the 507th Air Refueling Wing personify ‘Citizen Airmen’ as they successfully tackle the challenges of the wartime mobility Air Force,” said Lt. Gen. James F. Jackson, Air Force Reserve commander.

“They maintain impeccable readiness and

Manning numbers while supporting global humanitarian relief efforts and continuing the refueling demands. And, their on-going support of contingency operations and steadfast devotion to the

bracing responsibilities to their civilian employer, community and family,” said Col Russell A. Muncy, 507th Air Refueling Wing commander.

“Attending the A/TA conference was a wonderful opportunity for all who attended,” said Master Sgt. Amy Preskitt, First Sergeant 507 Civil Engineer Squadron. “We were able to learn many new things about the direction of the Air Force Reserve and Air Mobility Commands.

“In addition, there were many amazing speakers in attendance, including the Chief of Staff of the Air Force. I was moved by the passion and sincerity demonstrated by all of the speakers; it is obvious that they truly care about their people,” added Preskitt. “I’m honored to have been chosen to represent the 507th ARW in accepting this award.”

Lt. Gen. James E. Sherrard III had a most distinguished career - from his early days as a C-130 airlift pilot to this tenure at the highest levels of Air Force

Reserve leadership. Sherrard twice served as vice commander for the Air Force Reserve. Among his awards are the Distinguished Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Meritorious Service Medal with three oak leaf clusters, and the Armed Forces Reserve Medal with hourglass.

The A/TA is dedicated to ensuring that American military forces continue to have the air mobility capability required to implement U.S. national security strategy.



Courtesy photo

Members representing the 507th Air Refueling Wing receive the Lt. Gen. James E Sherrard III recently. From left to right: Gen. Walter Kross (USAF retired), Staff Sgt. Robert Mills, Senior Master Sgt. Darby Perrin, Senior Airman Mathew Pearsall, Master Sgt. Amy Preskitt, Col. Kevin Trayer, Chief Master Sgt. David Dickson, Tech Sgt. Jeff Bass and Lt. Gen. James “JJ” Jackson.

local Oklahoma City community indicate superior dedication and performance,” added Jackson.

The wing also highlighted in the nomination that during the Air Mobility Command Inspector General 2012 Nuclear and Operational Readiness Inspections; where the wing received back to back “Excellent” ratings.

“The 507th embodies the spirit and essence of today’s global mobility operations, maintaining a viable strategic reserve for tomorrow while em-

Top ten safety tips for the holiday season

Tech Sgt. Regina Rector
507th Air Refueling Wing, Ground Safety Manager

The holiday season brings pleasant memories for most, but as you prepare for these new memories, please remember some quick and easy safety tips from the Electrical Safety Foundation International.

These tips may prevent a fire in your home and prevent injury to you and others during the Holidays.

- **Inspect electrical decorations for damage before use**
- **Cracked or damaged sockets, loose or bare wires, and loose connections may cause a serious shock or start a fire**
- **Do not overload electrical outlets**

Overloaded electrical outlets and faulty wires are a common cause of holiday fires. Avoid over-

loading outlets and plug only one high-wattage appliance into each outlet at a time.

Never connect more than three strings of incandescent lights. More than three strands may not only blow a fuse, but can also cause a fire.

- **Keep tree fresh by watering daily**
- **Dry trees are a serious fire hazard**
- **Use battery-operated candles**

Candles start almost half of home decoration fires according to the National Fire Protection Agency.

Keep combustibles at least three feet from heat sources.

A heat source that was too close to the decoration was a factor in half of home fires that began with decorations.

- **Protect cords from damage**

To avoid shock or fire hazards, cords should never be pinched by furniture, forced into small

spaces such as doors or windows, placed under rugs, located near heat sources, or attached by nails or staples.

Check decorations for certification label.

- **Decorations not bearing a label from an Independent testing laboratory such as Underwriters**

Stay in the kitchen when something is cooking.

Unattended cooking equipment is the leading cause of home cooking fires (National Fire Protection Agency)

- **Turn off, unplug, and extinguish all decorations when going to sleep or leaving the house**

Half of home fire deaths occur between the hours of 11:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. according to the National Fire Protection Agency.

Reservists Return Home on Veterans Day

Senior Airman Caleb Wanzer
513th Air Control Group, Public Affairs

Eighty-nine reservists from the 513th Air Control Group returned here Sunday from a six month deployment to Southwest Asia supporting Operation Enduring Freedom.

Hundreds of family members, friends, co-workers, base leadership and even a high school marching band awaited them as they cleared customs and entered an aircraft hangar.

"I've never had a welcoming like this," Staff Sgt. Nicole Singh said. This is her third deployment as an Air Surveillance Technician assigned to the 970th Airborne Air Control Squadron. "We were all shocked at how many people were out there to support us."



Photo by Capt. Jon Quinlan
Master Sgt. Gabriel Richardson, an Air Surveillance Technician assigned to the 970th Airborne Air Control Squadron, embraces wife Candice and his six-month-old son for the first time. Richardson returned recently with 89 reservists from the 513th Air Control Group after a six-month deployment to Southwest Asia. Collin Richardson was born just a few days after Master Sgt. Richardson left on the deployment.

This is only the third time the E-3 Airborne Warning and Control System unit was activated. As reservists, the transition back to civilian life after a deployment can be a little tricky according to Sergeant Singh. "We loved the chance to serve next to our active duty partners. Now we are looking forward to getting back to our families and our civilian employers."

Friends and families, some who waited hours to see their Airmen, rushed in for hugs as the reservists stepped into the hangar on Sunday night. One family held a larger-than-life photo of a returning Airman above the crowd. The high school marching band from Carl Albert High

School supported the event with patriotic music.

One mother of a six-month-old baby held another sign that read, 'I've been waiting my whole life to meet you daddy.' Candice Richardson, from Ardmore, Okla., gave birth to her son five days after her husband left on the deployment.

"I could see him and I was shaking like a leaf," Mrs. Richardson said after spotting her husband, Master Sgt. Gabriel Richardson, in the line of Airmen getting off the jet.

Sergeant Richardson was able to keep in contact with his wife and newborn son through video chat while he was deployed overseas. "She sent numerous, thousands of pictures over," he said. "Skype is a beautiful thing."

The commander for the 970th Expeditionary Airborne Air Control Squadron, Lt. Col. Matthew Conrad was very pleased with the Airmen's job during their deployment.

"Everyone did a fantastic job, and we all did it together," Colonel Conrad said. The 970th EAACS, traditionally an Air Force Reserve squadron, contained a mix of active-duty and reserve Airmen. "We know what we can do, we know what our capabilities are, and if we're ever called upon we know how to do it again," he said



Photo by Capt. Jon Quinlan
Staff Sgt. Adam Watts, 970th Airborne Air Control Squadron, hugs his wife and son after returning from a six month long deployment supporting Operation Enduring Freedom.

when asked what the unit learned during their deployment,

The reservists were a part of about 150 personnel returning to home station at Tinker. The rest of the Airmen are assigned to the 552nd Air Control Wing.

The 513th Air Control Group is an associate unit of the 552nd ACW, providing flight crews and maintenance personnel to help fly and maintain the E-3 Sentry AWACS aircraft owned by the active-duty wing.

The Reservists, members of the 513th Air Control Group, were assigned to the 380th Air Expeditionary Wing.

Wingman Toolkit goes digital

Living life as a reservist can be stressful in a number of ways. A reservist is continuously trying to balance life between family, civilian work and Air Force Reserve requirements.

All of these forces working against each other can lead to a very unbalanced life. With that thought in mind, the Air Force Reserve Command has released the Wingman Toolkit.

This new website and mobile application is designed to help Airmen keep balance in their lives. The application has links for physical, mental, spiritual and social help. The phone number for the suicide prevention lifeline is also included if you should find yourself in need of talking to a trained professional.

Airman and their families can access this toolkit at AFRC.wingmantoolkit.org or download it on to your mobile phone using the iTunes or Android market place.



Fit to fight perfection has no age limitation

Senior Airman Mark Hybers
507th Air Refueling Wing Public Affairs

What could a Senior Master Sergeant, 16 months from retirement and a Senior Airman, barely two years into his career possibly have in common? Perfection.

Two members from the 507th Air Refueling Wing achieved something very few members of Air Force Reserves ever have, a perfect score on their fit to fight test.

Senior Master Sgt. Carol Suggs of the 465th Air Refueling Squadron and Senior Airman Krystopher Clarke of the 507th Civil Engineer Squadron both pulled off the lofty scores during their recent fit to fight tests this summer.

From first glance, these members appear to have very little in common. One is near the end of her career, the other just starting. But a common thread between them is the drive to achieve perfection.

Suggs, who has achieved this rare goal three times, remembers when she first came in the Air Force Reserves in 1985 at Charleston Air Force Base at the time there was no fitness testing. "The only thing we did back then was get a weight measurement," said Suggs. "If you were under your weight limit, great, if not you went on a weight loss program until you lost enough weight to pass."

Some of the component minimums and maximums have changed over the years, but the overall fit to fight program has not changed and is not going away. For Clarke the time leading up to his fit to fight was well focused.



Pictured above: Senior Airman Krystopher Clarke (Left) and Senior Master Sgt. Carol Suggs (Right)

"I was on upgrade training orders for 10 months at Altus Air Force Base, so I got to work out with active duty members every day," Clarke said. "I think that time was very helpful because the guys I train with are very competitive."

Suggs also believes being on orders or active status makes staying physically fit easier. "I think it's tougher for us (reservists), we have to maintain our discipline in our personal lives rather than be on active duty and get to go to structured PT three times per week."

Clarke's time on active duty training and running with partners helped put him over the top. "There were five guys in that squadron that are really competitive and I'm really competitive. That helped me get faster." Clarke added "eventually I became faster than most of them."

Clarke knew he had a shot at a perfect score after his previous test in which he scored a 98.5. The only component lacking a perfect score is the run. Clarke's previous time was 9:30.

"I knew when I started I had to run a 9:12 to get to that 100. I paced myself pretty good until the last lap," he said. "I literally sprinted the entire last lap and was shocked when I hit a time of 8:46."

The run was a key focus for Suggs as well. "I'm not a runner by nature," Suggs said. "I'm a bike rider. I like to get out and ride about 15

See Fitness on Page 8

Tinker Airman splits time between KC-135 and paint studio

Bruce T. Joyner
Associate Editor, Citizen Airman Magazine

As one of the top aviation artists in the country, Darby Perrin has painted pictures of hundreds of Air Force aircraft over the past 25 years. As an Air Force Reserve boom operator, Senior Master Sgt. Darby Perrin has refueled even more.

Perrin, who is assigned to the 507th Air Refueling Wing at Tinker Air Force Base, Okla., splits his time between his two "offices" at Tinker. His first office is the back of a KC-135 Stratotanker where he pumps gas to a wide range of U.S. and allied fighters, bombers and transport planes thousands of feet above the Earth. His second office is a 1,000-square-foot studio at the base's Skills Development Center where he deftly puts paint to canvas and brings those same fighters, bombers and transporters to life.

"I fly and I paint. I paint and I fly. I'm living the dream," Perrin said from his studio, where he just finished his latest painting of a B-17 in flight.

Perrin has been combining his love for painting and his love for aviation since he joined the Air Force in 1986. "My first assignment was at Eielson Air Force Base in Alaska where I was

put to work as a crew chief in the 6th Reconnaissance Wing, maintaining RC-135 spy planes," he said. "A friend of mine commissioned me to



Courtesy Photo of Senior Master Sgt. Darby Perrin working out of his office in the sky.

paint an RC-135V being escorted by a Russian Mig-31 Foxhound. That was the first of hundreds of images I would produce as lithographs, and within a month, I was sold out.

"Everything just kind of took off from there," he said. "Wherever my Air Force career has taken me, I've kept on painting."

After Eielson, Perrin worked as a phase dock inspector for the 89th Airlift Wing's fleet of

VC-135s, VC-137s and VC-9s at Andrews Air Force Base, Md. "I enjoyed working on aircraft, but I really wanted to fly," he said. So, he re-trained as an airborne communications technician aboard the E-3 Sentry AWACS aircraft, and was assigned to Tinker. "I made lots of friends in the AWACS community and was able to travel all around the world," he said. Four of his close friends lost their lives on Sept. 22, 1995 when an E-3 with the call sign Yukla 27 took off from Elmendorf AFB, Alaska, struck a flock of geese and went down in the woods a few miles away. All 24 crew members were killed. Perrin designed a memorial to Yukla 27 that stands at Tinker. The memorial was paid for by selling a memorial print titled "Twenty Four" that Perrin painted to honor the 24 people killed in the crash. He donated the original painting to the 962nd Airborne Warning and Control Squadron, the organization to whom the crew members were assigned.

Perrin left active duty in 1996 to try his hand at being a full-time professional artist. "I quickly found out that the life of a starving artist isn't all peaks," he said. "There are lots of valleys and I needed a way to make ends meet between the peaks." That's where the Air Force

See Painting on Page 8

Reservists from the 507th come together to honor award recipients



Photos by Senior Airman Mark Hybers

ABOVE: The 507th 2012 award winners come together for a night of celebration. From Left to Right: Senior Airman Fallon Carte, Col. Russell Muncy, Capt. Jacquelyn Stauffer, Senior Master Sgt. Taunya Avery, Master Sergeant Shaun Loeffler, Master Sgt. Joseph Lepine, Master Sgt. Travis Fowler (filling in for a deployed Staff Sgt. Robert Mills), and Chief Master Sgt. Stephen Brown.



LEFT: Master Sgt. Joseph Lepine of the 507th Maintenance Group accepts the First Sergeant of the Year Award from 507th Air Wing Commander, Col. Russell Muncy. The award was received at the Annual Awards Ceremony held on base recently as family, friends and guests from the 507th celebrated all the nominees and winners.



LEFT: Capt. Jacquelyn Stauffer of the 507th Logistics Readiness Squadron accepts the Company Grade Officer of the Year Award from 507th Air Wing Commander, Col. Russell Muncy. The award was received at the Annual Awards Ceremony held on base recently as family, friends and guests from the 507th celebrated all the nominees and winners.



LEFT: Senior Master Sgt. Taunya Avery from the 507th Maintenance Group accepts the Senior Non Commissioned Officer of the Year award from 507th Air Wing Commander, Colonel Russell Muncy. The award was received at the Annual Awards Ceremony held on base recently as family, friends and guests from the 507th celebrated all the nominees and winners.



LEFT: Senior Airman Fallon Carte of the 507th Civil Engineering Squadron receives the Airman of the Year Award from 507th Air Wing Commander, Col. Russell Muncy. The award was received at the Annual Awards Ceremony held on base recently as family, friends and guests from the 507th celebrated all the nominees and winners.

Reservists able to save, carryover leave balance from year to year

Col. Bob Thompson

Air Force Reserve, Public Affairs

In a “one-step-at-a-time” approach, Air Force officials have a new program for reservists to save and carryover leave time from year to year beginning Nov. 1.

Reservists performing duty under the Reserve Personnel Appropriation or RPA orders may now “save” their leave for future use. Prior to this change, reservists were required to use or

sell leave earned on orders of 30 days or more. RPA is a pay account specifically designed to pay reservists who are on a training tour of duty.

Any Airman serving a month of duty garners 2.5 days of leave. Previously, only Airmen in the Regular Air Force were allowed to save and carry up to 60 days of leave on the books as they cross the “use or lose” deadline on Oct. 1, each year.

Reservists cannot save their leave for next year if they are working on active duty under

Military Personnel Appropriation orders, or MPA; as well as, in direct support of war taskings under Overseas Contingency Operations funds, or OCO. No action is required by reservists since the military’s computer software automatically sells the leave and pays it to the service member.

Local military personnel flights can provide more information about the AFR Leave Carryover Program.

Fitness from Page 6

miles at least one day a week.”

Suggs also considers pushups an area that requires a lot of training. She said talking to people that she works with and people around the gym gave her a good foundation for strength training.

“I can watch a tape that shows me how to do a push up, but talking to different people and getting different exercises is more beneficial.” Suggs added different upper body strength routines to her workout such as dips and other chest and shoulder strength routines.

In fact, Suggs has an entire workout program put together to help her maintain physical fitness while at her home in Altus. She also eats right and goes to the gym four days a week with one additional workout at home.

Monday’s and Wednesday’s Suggs works out 2 miles on the treadmill and nautilus with upper body added. Tuesday’s and Thursday’s it’s the elliptical with other lower body workouts. One day a week she runs at the

reservoir near her house.

“The outside run adds diversity to my workout. Running on a treadmill is great, but you are getting pushed along,” she said. “Running two miles around the reservoir adds hills, turns, wind and other weather elements that you can’t get on

The workout program returned incredible results. Suggs turned in the best time of her 30 plus year career with a 12:53. That’s over 2:30 better than her previous best.

“When I came across the line on my final lap, I looked over and thought there was one more to go, but they told me I was finished. I couldn’t believe it, because I didn’t think I had one more in me,” an excited Suggs replied. “I then thought I was going to lose my breakfast!” she laughed.

Both Suggs and Clarke agree that working on your fitness is very important and also very difficult to maintain.

“The current fit to fight tempo is here to stay,” said Suggs. “We are not the way we were 20 years ago. Just remember, it’s your responsibility to maintain your fitness, how you do it is up to you. Find what works for you and go for it.”

Suggs and Clarke, two highly competitive and self motivated Airman that prove fitness and perfection are not bound by age.



a treadmill. You never know what the weather is going to be on test day, so that’s a crucial part of my training.”

Painting from Page 6

Reserve came to the rescue. “I joined the Reserve at the end of 1998 as a KC-135 boom operator,” he said. “And now the valleys aren’t so deep.” Now, he flies three or four days a week and paints three or four days a week, gathering inspiration for his work in the studio from the time he spends in the back of a KC-135.

“Flying translates directly into inspiration and stimulates imagination,” he said. “Both of these are critical for me to paint well.” Perrin sells lithographs out of his studio and online, but says he generates most of his business at various art shows throughout the country. His large paintings – most are 30-inches-by-48-inches or 20-inches-by-30-inches – take an

average of 80 hours to complete spread out over three or four weeks.

Some can take up to 200 hours. Asked if he has a favorite painting among the hundreds he has painted, Perrin said his favorite is always the one he is working on at the time. “I start out with an idea in my head and then do a little rough sketching,” he said. “But, the finished painting never ends up like the one I originally envisioned. I just go wherever the painting takes me.”

Perrin encourages Reservists who find themselves at Tinker to come by his studio in the Skills Development Center and chat for



Senior MSgt Darby Perrin spends time painting when he’s not in the air refueling planes. (Photo by Bruce T. Joyner, Citizen Airman Magazine)

awhile. If he’s not in his airborne office on that day, he would love to put down his paint brushes for a few minutes and show you around his other office.