

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

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On-final



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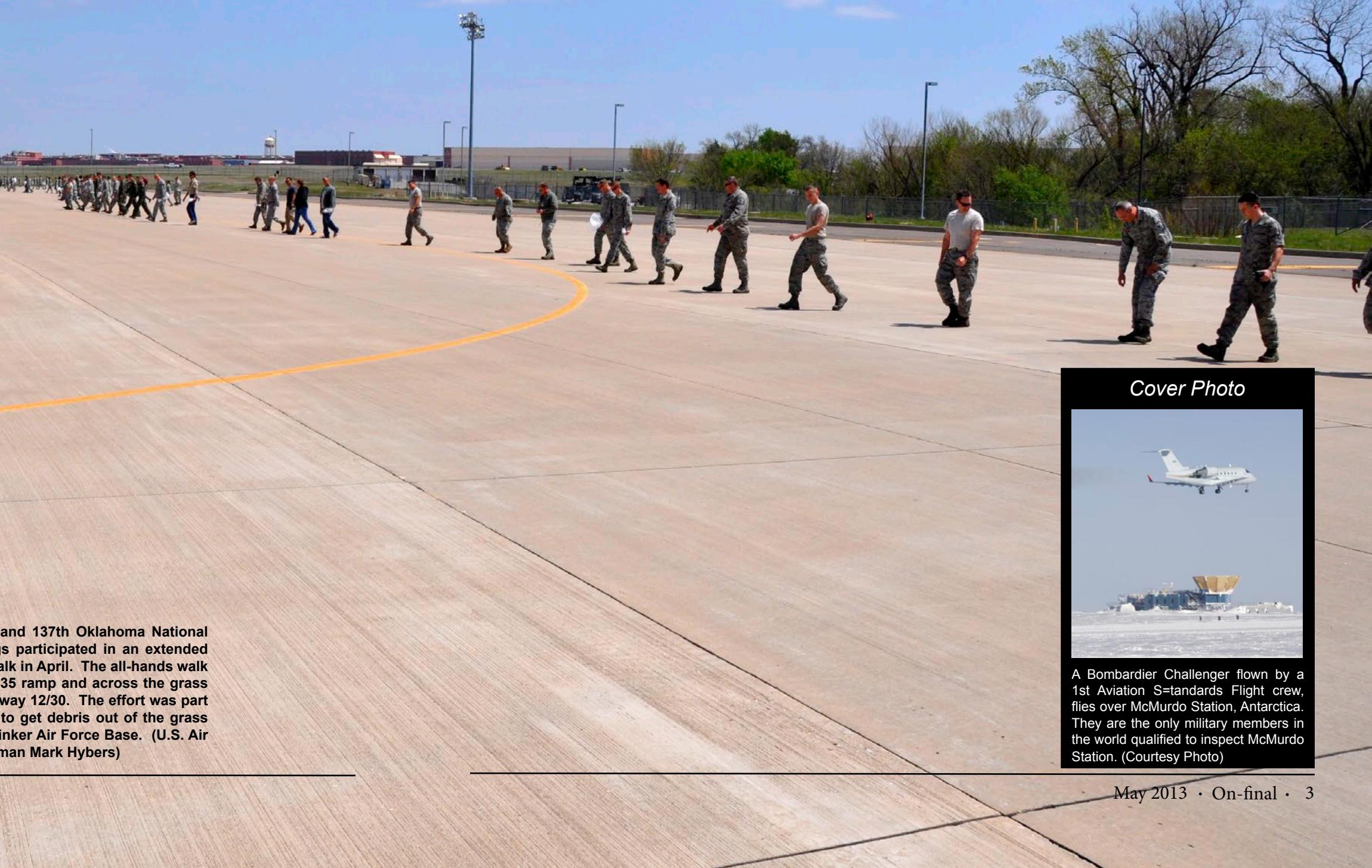
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A Bombardier Challenger flown by a 1st Aviation S=standards Flight crew, flies over McMurdo Station, Antarctica. They are the only military members in the world qualified to inspect McMurdo Station. (Courtesy Photo)

On-final

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Members from the 507th and 137th Oklahoma National Guard Air Refueling Wings participated in an extended Foreign Object Damage walk in April. The all-hands walk extended across the KC-135 ramp and across the grass to cover both sides of runway 12/30. The effort was part of a base-wide FOD walk to get debris out of the grass and off runways around Tinker Air Force Base. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Mark Hybers)

Commentary

It's not just the destination, it's also the journey

by Col. Jeff Pickard

507th Air Refueling Wing

Maintenance Group Commander

The 507th Air Refueling Wing has been on a journey since the unit stood up in 1944 as a Fighter Group. Through the years, each new mission, aircraft, and person has added to the whole. From 16 enemy aircraft kills in WWII to being awarded full designation as a "Wing" in 1961, our history is rich in accomplishments. In 2011, "Team Tinker" started on another journey as we geared up for Nuclear and Conventional Operational Readiness Inspections with the desired destination to demonstrate the readiness of our team; and you did, scoring an "Excellent" for both. With all this history behind us, we need to be ready for the next challenge, the next destination.

As a wing, I believe we need to remain focused on our near term destinations, while ensuring we position ourselves to be ready for the next history making journey. We should continue to focus on the short term, while not losing sight on longer term readiness. All of us need to be great leaders AND great followers. Will you be ready to assume more responsibility, more leadership, and more authority....when that time comes? The time is now.

When I was in basic training back in 1980, my training squadron had a motto "Lead, Follow or get out of the way!" Over the years, that motto stayed with me and I believe it inspired me to go further than I thought I could; it became part of me as a person, follower and leader. I believe that everyone in the 507th has found themselves in every one of these roles... leading, following or just getting out of the way, often wearing multiple hats in those roles.

Our wing needs us to step up and take leadership roles at every level;

take followership roles at every level; and for those of us who find ourselves getting out of the way, we need to step up into both leader and follower roles. That is the only way we will be ready to showcase our talents during the next history making destination...when our time comes. Here are some thoughts I believe can help you, should you choose to use them, and it doesn't matter where you are in the chain:

Recruit – We all need to be recruiters, tell our story and help bring new folks onto our team. Once you know there is a new person joining our team, we need great sponsor's assigned to them (there's no second chance to make a good first impression); then we need to ensure the new members have all the uniforms they need to be successful and make them feel part of the team.

When sitting down with them for the first time, let them know what your expectations are for the next six months (give them a plan, let them know what to expect), then get them in the work area, doing their job (they joined to work airplanes, take blood pressure, repair runways, etc... not to die by PowerPoint). Then get back with them at the end of every unit training assembly for the first six months to see how they are doing, see what they learned, find out if they get paid on time...help them understand how important they are to our future.

Retain – Once they are firmly in the long term, when the time comes.... that "next challenge" will come and go faster than you thought and we will find ourselves embarking on a new journey towards yet another destination. So focus on the journey by ensuring you and those around you are ready for every new history making destination, you'll be surprised at how much you have grown personally and professionally. Oh yeah, and have fun along the way too!



Col. Jeff Pickard
507th Maintenance Group Commander

just as highly skilled as you on the job and need leadership training along the way as well.

Take the time to recognize them publicly. When deserved, make sure you write a strong decoration package; nothing will inspire your folks more than when they are publicly recognized for their service and sacrifice. Help guide them, ensuring they have opportunities for PME, leadership development, and other attributes that will help them be ready for increased responsibility/promotion, when the time comes.

If you focus on the near term and the long term, when the time comes.... that "next challenge" will come and go faster than you thought and we will find ourselves embarking on a new journey towards yet another destination. So focus on the journey by ensuring you and those around you are ready for every new history making destination, you'll be surprised at how much you have grown personally and professionally. Oh yeah, and have fun along the way too!

Wing News

1st ASF NCO saves Cessna crew after crash

by Maj. Jon Quinlan

507th Air Refueling Wing Public Affairs

them over to our vehicle and sat them down in a shaded area."

"The injured men were disoriented and going into shock due to their severe impact and burn injuries," Castleberry said. "We verified that there were no other souls on board as we moved them away from the searing heat and the danger of secondary explosions. We sat them down in a shaded area and immediately began administering first aid."

Tech Sgt. Brent Castleberry, 1st ASF, was performing routine maintenance on the approach lights at the airport when a departing Cessna 421 Eagle passenger transport aircraft experienced a serious malfunction and attempted an immediate emergency return to the airfield. The aircraft entered a stall and crashed within seconds, erupting into flames less than 500 feet from Castleberry.

Castleberry along with his co-worker David Davis who both work for the Federal Aviation Administration's Fort Worth System Support Center quickly responded to rescue their fellow Airmen.

"We observed the twin engine aircraft as it entered a stall just overhead," recalled Castleberry. "I told Davis, 'He isn't going to make it I'm calling 911.' He said, 'Do it!'"

The fuel laden aircraft crashed creating a fireball, throwing the pilot and passenger from the aircraft. Castleberry could feel the explosion's intense heat as he and Davis rushed to the accident site. The two crewmembers were badly burned and needed immediate medical assistance.

"We asked them twice if there were any other souls on board. We got



Reservist Tech Sgt. Brent Castleberry, 1st Aviation Standards Flight, is being hailed as an angel in waiting after he and a co-worker saved two Cessna 421 crewmembers from their burning wreckage at Fort Worth Spinks Airport on September 12, 2012. (Photo illustration by Senior Airman Mark Hybers)

Normally, Castleberry and Davis would have been working directly at the impact zone, but on this day they took a left and worked at the control building instead. They said they think they were supposed to be there to help the crewmembers.

Tech Sgt. Castleberry and David Davis are veterans and credit their military backgrounds for their quick response to the crash. Davis served during the Vietnam War and Sergeant Castleberry has over 17 years of military service in active duty, guard and the reserves and currently works for the FAA. Additionally, he works as an Air Force reservist conducting flight inspections at the 1st ASF. Both Davis and Castleberry also have experience as safety liaisons which also helped prepare them.

1st ASF commander, Lt. Col.

See Hero on page 12

Spotlight

The Inspection team you've never heard of...

by Senior Airman Mark Hybers

507th Air Refueling Wing Public Affairs

The 1st Aviation Standards Flight is a small team of reservists performing critical inspections to ensure aircraft take off and land safely, not only at Tinker Air Force Base, but locations all over the globe.

The 24-member flight, located at the Federal Aviation Administration center at Will Rogers World Airport is a little known part of the 507th Air Refueling Wing. This unique flight augments the FAA's flight inspection mission and works hand in hand with their active duty counterparts, 375th Air wing Detachment 1.

This small team of inspectors spends a great deal of time flying in either the Bombardier Challenger aircraft running inspections on everything from takeoff and landing systems to flight routes as well as low

level routes.

Missions are typically flown every other week. Planning for these inspections involves a great deal of preparation.

"A four or five day trip typically has two full days of planning," said Senior Master Sgt. Brian Davie, 1st ASF mission specialist superinten-

assist the FAA with their annual inspection at McMurdo Station, a U.S. Antarctic research center located on the southern tip of Ross Island.

Inspections in Antarctica take place at the beginning of the summer season, which is normally in October or early November. The team members from 1st ASF are the only military personnel in the world qualified to inspect McMurdo Station.

"One of the reasons we have unit members participate in this mission every year is because they utilize a microwave landing system there which is seen very rarely," said 1st ASF Commander, Lt. Col. Dustin Welsh. "There are still some military installations and forward operating locations that use this same system, so it's good training for us."

The lack of qualified inspectors isn't the only challenge when it comes to the yearly McMurdo mission. The environment creates many problems.

"Storms, often referred to as "herbies" can bring visibility down to zero... even vehicle operations are conducted by driving flag to flag" -- Maj. Brett VanMeter

dent. "Then there is a couple days of post trip reporting. So the whole process for one inspection can take quite a bit of our time."

While the normal two week planning, performing and post reporting takes place, this team also prepares to

Spotlight

Getting in and out of airports safely is their business

"Operations are conducted in extremely cold temperatures, and in an area where weather patterns are constantly changing," said Maj. Brett VanMeter, 1st ASF standards team. "Due to these extreme conditions, the aircraft is operated 24 hour-a-day, stopping only for fuel and a change of crew."

Ensuring navigation aids are performing correctly is crucial in an environment where storms, often referred to by the locals as "herbies," could last for days.

"These storms take visibility down to zero," said VanMeter. "Even vehicle operations are conducted by driving flag to flag."

VanMeter said when a "herbie" is too strong, flight operations cease altogether, however, maintenance crews are required to stay with the aircraft and periodically start the engines to keep them warm so that all aircraft and electronic systems operate normally.

An operation conducted in an environment where there is no discernible horizon is called a 'flat light.' VanMeter said this type of flying makes it hard for pilots to visually determine how high they are above the ground.

"When we fly in an environment like that, a third pilot is normally aboard as a safety pilot to help monitor the radar altimeter and provide another set of eyes for safe operations," he said.

Several runways at McMurdo Station are inspected each year. There is an ice runway that aircraft like the Challengers used by 1st ASF fly. There are also two ski runways and one emergency ski runway that are used during the summer months by ski-equipped C-130s for primary air support.

To further solidify the need for these annual inspections and ensure all systems are working properly, the location at Antarctica has a magnetic variation that is approximately 167 degrees VanMeter said.

"That means when pilots look at their flight instruments on approach, the normal system shows the airfield is behind the aircraft," he added. "That means the pilot has to mentally turn the plane around in their head in order to approach."

All of those variables, plus the constant slow movement of the ice pack on which the runway is, increase the need for yearly inspections.

The unit also deploys on a regular basis to overseas combat zones performing inspections on mobile ground systems ensuring NATO aircraft are getting in and out of theater safely.

"The reason the Air Force is a component of the FAA's flight inspection mission is because the FAA does not direct civilians into combat zones," said Welsh. "The 1st ASF's partnership with the FAA flight inspection team in day to day operations and on special missions like Antarctica, affords us the training and experience to successfully execute our combat mission."



U.S. Air Force's only reserve AWACS unit receives a new commander

by Staff Sgt. Caleb Wanzer

513th Air Control Group public affairs

Lt. Col. Brent Vander Pol assumed command of the 970th Airborne Air Control Squadron, the Air Force's only reserve Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) squadron, in an April 5 change of command ceremony presided by 513th Air Control Group Commander, Col. Jeffrey McGalliard.

Vander Pol comes to the 970th AAC from the 513th Operations Support Flight, where he served as the director of operations. He first came to the 513th Air Control Group in 2003 and has held various positions including Instructor Pilot and Standardization and Evaluation Chief.

"The 970th is not a building, a patch or a sign on the wall," Vander Pol said. "It's a collection of great people who are willing to sacrifice their time for something greater than themselves."

He succeeds Lt. Col. Matthew Conrad, who took command of the 970th AAC in October 3, 2009. In his farewell remarks during the ceremony, Conrad spoke of the importance of each Airman within the squadron.

"Every individual in the 970th has their own story and set of motivations," Conrad said. "As the com-



Lt. Col. Brent Vander Pol (right) receives the 970th Airborne Air Control Squadron guidon from presiding officer, Col. Jeffrey McGalliard, 513th Air Control Group Commander in a change of command ceremony here April 5. Vander Pol now commands the Air Force's only reserve Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) squadron. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Caleb Wanzer)

mander, getting to know my folks and watching them make a difference has truly been one of the most satisfying privileges."

As commander of the 970th AAC, Vander Pol heads up the only AWACS squadron in the Air Force Reserve. The squadron has played a role in operations since its stand-up in 1996, most recently Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom.

Vander Pol graduated from the United States Air Force Academy in

1989 and is a command pilot with more than 3,000 flight hours, mostly in the E-3 Sentry. In his civilian occupation, he is a pilot with United Airlines and has flown over 10,000 hours in the Boeing 737 and 777 aircraft.

"You take care of the people of the unit, and the people will take care of the mission," McGalliard said to Vander Pol during the ceremony. "I have faith in you to successfully lead this squadron into the future."

507th, 137th ARW conduct emergency evacuation exercise

by Lt. Col. Kim Howerton

507th Air Refueling Wing Public Affairs

Members of the 507th and 137th Oklahoma Air National Guard Air Refueling Wings fuels shops tested their emergency evacuation response skills and teamwork here March 20.

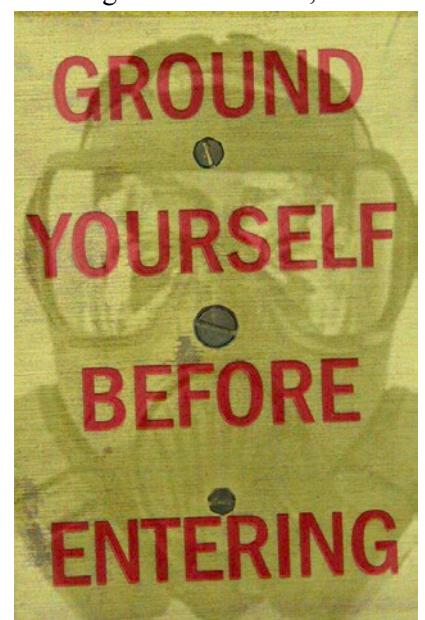
The exercise is an annual requirement allowing contributors to the wings' joint emergency extraction plan to see if their written requirements translated into workable plans when executed, according to Exercise Evaluation Team chief Lt. Col. Trina Hood, 507th ARW.

The fuel shop personnel demonstrated excellent skills and seamless teamwork when called into action, according to exercise organizer Master Sgt. Tom Verdine, 137th ARW fuels shop chief. Verdine and Tech. Sgt. Roger Garrett, 507th Maintenance Squadron fuels shop chief, conducted the exercise to allow key contributors to the 507th and 137th emergency extraction plan to see their plans in action. Hood worked with the group to

clarify the purpose of the exercise and the importance of member feedback.

Verdine and Garrett intentionally held the exercise before the extraction plan was signed in order to give them an opportunity to review the plan in action during the exercise and review their evaluation requirements.

During the exercise, Verdine



handed an exercise input card to fuel shop member Airman 1st Class Raina Kanoff informing her of the unresponsive team member inside the fuel cell of the aircraft. Kanoff called into the aircraft to check on the unresponsive airman and told her co-worker, Tech. Sgt. Russell Conner, to report the problem to the maintenance operations center and request emergency responders.

Conner made the call and then helped Kanoff put on her protective gear. She entered the aircraft, and changed out the respiratory filter of the rescue dummy that was used inside the aircraft. The team used the correct two-person carry to carry the airman outside the hangar to begin self-aid and buddy care. Once the fire department representatives witnessed the buddy care being administered the exercise was terminated.

Base fire department representatives were impressed with the excellent response by the fuel cell team members.

Time to review the Family Medical Leave Act

by Maj. Jack Spencer

507th Air Refueling Wing legal office

We all recognize the important role our families play in our military career. Congress recognizes that role as well and passed certain protections for family members of reservists in an amendment to the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) that can be found at 29 CFR 825.126. This protection is available to immediate family members of a reservist deployed to a foreign country under a Federal call or order to active duty in support of a contingency operation. Covered family members include spouses, children, and parents

of the reserve member (regardless of the reserve member's age). It must be noted that the FMLA only guarantees the family member the ability to take time off from work. A covered family member is entitled to take FMLA leave in a number of circumstances. For example, a family member is entitled to take up to seven calendar days of leave to help prepare for a short notice deployment. Further, family members are entitled to take leave to attend any official military ceremony or event that is directly related to the upcoming deployment. This specifically includes Airman and Family Readiness

programs, Red Cross briefings, and other important programs established for military families. Family members are also entitled to take leave to take care of financial and legal arrangements such as powers of attorney or wills, attend to childcare and certain school needs, enroll in DEERS and get military IDs. Additionally, family members are entitled to take up to 15 days of leave to be with the military member during any approved R&R period.

For further information, please contact your local Air Force legal office.

Wing Feature

Collaboration...the Buccaneer Way

by Maj. Mark Vardaro

507th Air Refueling Wing

Air Force Reserve
Recruiting Team
For information give us a call or click on
the photo to send an email (web version
only).



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Members of the Development and Training Flight received team building, planning, and collaboration training through the use of a simulation game called "The Buccaneer."

Maj. Mark Vardaro facilitated the game which places participants in teams of five to six people. Each team forms a ship which sails from England in the 18th century with the goal of traveling to various islands across the Seven Seas in search of gold buried by the notorious pirate "Black Beard". The gold is to be brought back to the Queen for fame and honor.



Members of the Development and Training Flight partake in team building, planning and collaboration training during the April Unit Training Assembly. The training is designed to teach the DTF members how to work within a team. (Photo by Maj. Mark Vardaro)

Each team member is given a specific position to fulfill (captain, first officer, boatswain, lookout, mate, and the navigator). Before embarking on their 18-month journey, teams had to plan their route as well as obtain the needed food, water, and miscellaneous supplies they would need along the way.

During their journey, they experience several obstacles such as typhoons, extreme heat and cold, rain and heavy currents. Each of the obstacles had the potential to cause the teams ship to stray away from the planned route while at the same time creating a need for everyone to focus on their position, communicate, and work together to stay on track.

"The exercise provided a solid example of how to work together within a team as well as with other teams to achieve a common objective, both very applicable to basic military training concepts," said Master Sgt. Blochowiaik, 507th Air Refueling Wing Development and Training Flight program manager. "Maj. Vardaro identified the appropriate type of training to prepare the trainees to both work together as a group and to not leave anyone behind. From the teamwork and communication exhibited during the game, I would expect to see many of the participants go on to be dorm chiefs, element leaders, and other positions that utilize key leadership qualities."

At the end of the simulation, participants take the lessons they learned during the game and discuss how they apply in real life situations. The key themes identified by the participants included the importance of planning, communication, learning and fulfilling your role on the team, and thinking out of the box.

by Tech. Sgt. Sandra Hatton

513th Air Control Group Public Affairs

Although they aren't in the same career field, Master Sgt. Frank Deitchman and Airman 1st Class Dennis Deitchman are a father-son team proud to serve and work on the E-3 Sentry here at Tinker Air Force Base, Okla.

Sergeant Deitchman is an air radar technician with more than 5,400 flight hours on the Air Warning and Control System (AWACS) aircraft. He is assigned to the 513th Air Control Group and has been stationed at Tinker AFB since 1990.

Airman Deitchman is an electronic warfare technician assigned to the 552 Aircraft Maintenance Squadron. He has been stationed at Tinker AFB for less than a year.

Sergeant Deitchman believes that growing up around the Air Force influenced his son's decision to join. Airman Deitchman started asking about and showing interest in all of the services, but the Air Force appealed most to him.

"It seemed like a good career opportunity and a good way to go see new places and do things I wouldn't have gotten to do," Airman Deitchman said.

Although he hoped to visit new places and experience different bases and aircraft, he wasn't disappointed when he found out his first duty station would be close to his hometown.

"It's nice to be home with family and friends. It makes some things a lot easier," Airman Deitchman said.

Sergeant Deitchman had mixed

Wing News

Tinker AWACS' father-son team

emotions about his son's assignment. He knew that his son wanted to see more of the world, but he certainly appreciated having him close to home.

"It's pretty cool to go out to the flight line and see your own son working hard to keep us flying and safe. Makes me very proud," he said.

Airman Deitchman takes a lot of pride in serving with his father.

"The most rewarding part of my job is that I get to make sure the aircraft [my dad] flies on is good to go and that I help in making sure he and his crew get home safely," Airman Deitchman said.



Master Sgt. Frank Deitchman (right) and Airman 1st Class Dennis Deitchman (left) are a father-son team working on the E-3 Sentry. Frank works as a Reserve member in the 513th and son Dennis is serving on active duty in the 552nd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Caleb Wanzer)

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May 2013 Promotions:
Congratulations to the following
507th Air Refueling Wing members



To Major
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CAPT CHITWOOD, CODY DE-WAYNE MAJ, 970 AIRBORNE AIR CTRL SQ
CAPT COGER, BRENTON R, 507 MEDICAL SQ
CAPT COLLINS, JENNIFER MARIE, 507 MISSION SUPPORT GP
CAPT GILL, HARSHMIR KAUR, 970 AIRBORNE AIR CTRL SQ
CAPT POPOOLA, OLAYANJU ANDREW, 970 AIRBORNE AIR CTRL SQ
CAPT PORTNO, MATTHEW JOHN, 970 AIRBORNE AIR CTRL SQ
CAPT VILLENA, JOHNNY ELIAS, 970 AIRBORNE AIR CTRL SQ
CAPT QUINLAN, JON, 507 ARW/PA



To Airman
AB KHALI, TABITHA G, 35 CBCS
AB YOUNG, BRIDGETTE N, 507 FSS



To Airman 1st Class
AMN LEMLEY, JOSHUA B, 507 AMXS
AMN WELLS, MELISSA



To Senior Airman
A1C DEGRASSE, KAYLEIGH A.
A1C GLOVER, JASON E, 507 AMXS
A1C GRIFFITH, ETHAN J, 72 APS
A1C HALL, ALICIA L, 513 OSF
A1C HORVATH, MICHAEL A, 507 AMXS
A1C MIRANDA, CAITLIN M, 72 APS
A1C PRATT, THEODORE T, 507 LRS
A1C RODRIGUES, PATRICK, 507 MXS
A1C ZIMMERMAN, SHELBY, 970 AAC



To Staff Sergeant
SRA GILLIAM, MICAHEL A, 507 MXS
SRA MAXWELL, KYLE A, 507 MXS
SRA SPANGLER, RAY G, 507 AMXS



To Tech Sergeant
SSG GIBSON, WILLIAM C, 513 MXS
SSG HEATH, STEPHANIE, 507 LRS
SSG PHARR, NATALIE E, 507 FSS



To Senior Master Sergeant
MSG THOMAS, AARON P, 507 AMXS



To Chief Master Sergeant
SMS GOULD, GEORGE A, 72 APS

Every Dollar Counts campaign to launch May 1



WASHINGTON (AFNS) -- Beginning May 1, Airmen can submit their cost-reducing ideas via the Airmen Powered by Innovation websites while at home, the office or on their smartphones.

With budgets shrinking, Air Force leaders are calling on Airmen to share their best money-saving ideas through the "Every Dollar Counts" campaign.

In the wake of sequestration, the initiative marks a cultural shift that empowers Airmen to find and recommend areas for savings that may be used to support readiness needs, said Air Force Vice Chief of Staff Gen. Larry Spencer.

Both uniformed and civilian Air Force members can participate in the month-long open call for ideas and share their creative and efficient ways to save money and time.

"When things get tough, Airmen figure out a way to get it done," Spencer said. "We have some of the most innovative folks in the world, so I know there are ideas about how we can do things better."

Because of Spencer's resource management and budget-related background he understands the urgency to mine those ideas.

"We stopped flying one-third of Air Force active-duty, combat-coded fighter squadrons in April, and we're projected to slow down or stop the flow of aircraft and engines in the depots," Spencer said.

Furthermore, he said, the Air Force must trim about \$11 billion in the last half of fiscal 2013. Additionally, our overseas contingency operations funding is almost \$2 billion short, so we have to make up that difference as well.

And the challenge is compounded by the sequester timeline, which offi-

ce (Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio,) manages the money we spend on flying hours, sustaining space operations and depot operations -- over \$16 billion -- so we're taking a close review of that account to determine how we can stretch those dollars.

"This is an opportunity to not only look at homegrown ideas, but broader ideas that affect the larger Air Force as well."

The general expressed optimism in quickly finding solutions through ideas.

"Innovation is what we're all about," Spencer said. "This is our family and we're going to get through this because we've got great Airmen to help see us through this."

Hero from page 5

Dustin Welsh was not surprised by Castleberry's quick response in aid of his fellow man.

"Brent is an outstanding example of a model citizen Airmen. He truly embodies the Air Force core values, especially that of service before self," said Welsh. "I'm proud we have a unit member in our midst, who was able to rise up and meet the challenge that this tragic accident presented. Sergeant Castleberry's heroic actions, without a doubt, helped to ensure the survival of the crewmembers."

"Whether it's \$500, \$1 million or \$30 million, we want to hear it because those dollars add up," he said. "We're taking every angle we can to manage our money and 'buy' as much mission as we can. In that sense, every Airman, whether they're at a wing or headquarters can help."

Spencer said the Every Dollar Counts campaign does not just focus on our wings but includes those large, centrally managed accounts as well.

"The Centralized Asset Management Office at Wright Patterson (Air

Safety is not by chance

Safe 'n sound all year round

by Tech. Sgt. Regina Rector

507th Air Refueling Wing Safety Manager

The Air Force Critical Days of Summer (CDS) Campaign 2013 theme is "Safe 'n Sound – All Year Round". The campaign is set to begin on May 24, 2013 and end on 3 September 2013. It has been developed to raise awareness of the summer season hazards.

Its purpose is to help all Airmen mitigate those hazards and to understand that safety has a role in everything we do, both on and off-duty. While all Airmen have a commitment to the core values of Integrity, Service, and Excellence, Airmen must also have a commitment to their family, friends, co-workers and country to value safety as well as the safety of others, with the same intensity that is held for our other core values.

To help us get prepared for the Memorial Day weekend, there are two topics I would like to remind all as they get ready for the summer:

Road Trips

Private motor vehicle mishaps continue to be the number one cause of fatalities in the Air Force during the summer. Although the percentage of PMV-related fatalities during the previous three CDS campaigns (2010, 2011, 2012) has decreased slightly (75 percent, 72 percent, and 69 percent, respectively), it remains by far the major cause of fatalities throughout the summer. Many of us wait for summer to take leave to enjoy the clear and dry road conditions for travel, the warm

and sunny weather is just calling for us to get "On the Road Again."

When you take your well-earned leave, keep in mind that your family, friends and co-workers want you to return rested and refreshed. To help you get back "Safe 'n Sound," remember you have the responsibility to plan for and mitigate hazards.

TRIPS is an on-line, automated driving risk-assessment tool, hosted by the Army Combat Readiness Center for the Air Force. You use it before going on your trip to ensure you have a plan for all possible situations.

Driving while fatigued is not a good idea. If you are feeling fatigue, pull over and take a break. If you need to stop for the night and rest, do it. When you drive while fatigued, you could misperceive things, which could cause accidents. Traffic-safety.org has a good quiz to see how knowledgeable you are about fatigue.

Grilling Safety



Who doesn't love the smell and taste of food from a grill? When you're getting ready to grill for the first time, start with grill maintenance.

Check your owner's manual and the manufacturer's website for the specifics on your equipment. The National Fire Protection Agency has these grilling safety tips:

Safety Tips

Propane and charcoal BBQ grills should only be used outdoors.

The grill should be places well away from the home, deck railings and out from under eaves and overhanging branches.

Keep children and pets at least three feet away from the grill area.

Keep your grill clean by removing grease or fat buildup from the grills and in trays below the grill.

Never leave your grill unattended.

Always make sure your gas grill lid is open before lighting it.

Charcoal Grills

There are several ways to get the charcoal ready to use. Charcoal chimney starters allow you to start the charcoals using newspaper as a fuel.

If you use a starter fluid, use only charcoal starter fluid. Never add charcoal fluid or any other flammable liquids to the fire.

Keep charcoal fluid out of the reach of children and away from heat sources.

There are also electric charcoal starters, which do not use fire. Be sure to use an extension cord for outdoor use.

When you are finished grilling, let the coals completely cool before disposing in a metal container.



The sun shines down on the boom of a KC-135 Stratotanker here April 22. Members of the 507th and 137th took advantage of the rare April sunny day participating in a FOD walk. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Mark Hybers)