

# ON FINAL

DECEMBER 2015

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE 507TH AIR REFUELING WING

**SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
OPENS ALL MILITARY  
ROLES TO WOMEN**

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**HOLIDAY TREE  
LIGHTING**

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**ENGINE SHOP RUNS  
FULL THROTTLE**





Vol. 35, No. 9 // 2015

# DECEMBER



## COVER

### HOLIDAY TREE LIGHTING

Col. Stephanie Wilson, 72nd Air Base Wing commander, prepares to flip the switch on the holiday lights with help from children of military members from around the base at the Annual Tinker Holiday Tree Lighting and Parade Dec. 2, 2015, at Tinker Air Force Base, Okla.

COVER PHOTO by Tech. Sgt. Lauren Gleason

## SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Defense Secretary Ash Carter makes historical decision allowing women to enter all combat roles in the military. p. 6

## JET ENGINE SHOP

507th Propulsion Maintenance shop discusses day-to-day operations and how they get the job done

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## WING COMMAND CHIEF

Chief Master Sgt. Stephen A. Brown

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DESIGN/LAYOUT BY TECH. SGT. LAUREN GLEASON

# Reservists celebrate the holidays at Annual Tinker Tree Lighting Celebration

Photos by Tech. Sgt. Lauren Gleason



72 Air Base Wing commander Col. Stephanie Wilson addresses the audience of servicemembers and their families just before the tree lighting ceremony Dec. 2, 2015, at the Tinker Club at Tinker Air Force Base, Okla.



Two children of 507th Air Refueling Wing members stand at the curb and watch as the Tinker Honor Guard leads the Annual Holiday Parade down Mitchell Dr. Dec. 2, 2015, at Tinker Air Force Base, Okla.



A child of a 507th Air Refueling Wing member sits on Santa's lap after Dec. 2, 2015, at Tinker Air Force Base, Okla.

# Carter opens all military occupations, positions to women

By Cheryl Pellerin, DoD News, Defense Media Activity

WASHINGTON -- Defense Secretary Ash Carter announced Dec. 3 that beginning in January 2016, all military occupations and positions will be open to women, without exception.

For the first time in U.S. military history, as long as they qualify and meet specific standards, the secretary said women will be able to contribute to the Defense Department mission with no barriers at all in their way.

"They'll be allowed to drive tanks, fire mortars and lead infantry soldiers into combat," Carter added. "They'll be able to serve as Army Rangers and Green Berets, Navy SEALs, Marine Corps infantry, Air Force parajumpers, and everything else that was previously open only to men."

Harnessing Women's Skills, Perspectives

Even more importantly, he said, the military services will be better able to harness the skills and perspectives that talented women have to offer.

Despite real progress in recent decades and lately, opening more than 111,000 positions to women across the services, Carter said that about 10 percent of military positions -- nearly 220,000 total -- have remained closed to women.

These included infantry, armor, reconnaissance, and some special operations units, the secretary said.

Over the past three years, he added, senior civilian and military leaders across the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps and Special Operations Command have studied the integration of women into these positions.

"Last month I received their recommendations [and] the data, studies and surveys on which they were based regarding whether any of those remaining positions warrant a continued exemption



Airman 1st Class Natasha Libby, an aerial gunner with the 66th Rescue Squadron, stands next to an HH-60 Pave Hawk June 20, 2013, at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev. Libby is the only female among more than 30 gunners assigned to the 66th RQS. (U.S. Air Force photo/Senior Airman Daniel Hughes)

from being opened to women," Carter said, noting that the Army, Navy, Air Force and SOCOM said none of the positions warranted exemptions.

The Marine Corps asked for a partial exemption in areas that included infantry, machine gunner, fire support reconnaissance and others, he added, "[but] we are a joint force and I have decided to make a decision which applies to the entire force."

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Marine Corps Gen. Joseph F. Dunford Jr. was the Marine Corps commandant at the time, and Carter said that he and Dunford have discussed the issue many times.

"I just met with him and the other chiefs and service secretaries today, and he will be a full part of implementation," Carter added, noting that he believes the

issues raised by the Marine Corps can and will be addressed in implementation.

Departmental Memorandum

In a memorandum to the secretaries of all military departments and others, Carter directed the military services to open all military occupational specialties to women 30 days from today -- a waiting period required by law -- and by that date to provide updated implementation plans for integrating women into the positions now open to them.

Carter said Deputy Defense Secretary Bob Work and Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Air Force Gen. Paul Selva will oversee the decision's short-term implementation, ensure there are no unintended consequences to the joint force, and periodically update Carter and Dunford.



Maj. Jon Quinlan, the public affairs officer from 507th Air Refueling Wing Public Affairs, shakes hands with a new enlistee after administering the Oath of Enlistment Oct. 7, 2015, at Tinker Air Force Base, Okla.

## Reserve RECRUITERS



Chief Master Sgt. Steven Fousek  
Flight Chief

Tinker AFB, OK  
Office (405) 734-5331  
Cell (405) 409-4784



Master Sgt. Derrick Mills  
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Midwest City, OK  
Cell (405) 409-5811



Tech. Sgt. Nickette Parrish  
Line Recruiter  
Moore, OK  
Cell (405) 409-6311

For information on opportunities in the AF Reserve, give one of our team members a call today.

# 2nd Lt. James Harbison

**507TH MISSION SUPPORT GROUP  
EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

**WHAT IS A LITTLE-KNOWN FACT ABOUT YOU?**

I was prior-enlisted for eight years, as a material handler in the Logistics Readiness Squadron, at Buckley and Scott Air Force Base. In college, I failed my freshman year because I took part in too many fraternity parties.

**WHEN DID YOU JOIN THE AIR FORCE?**

Sep. 5, 2005.

**WHAT IS YOUR CIVILIAN JOB?**

ART, 507th MSG Executive Officer.

**WHAT IS YOUR CAREER GOAL?**

I plan to develop and grow in my military career while mentoring and molding the next generation of Airmen.

**WHAT DID YOU WANT TO BE WHEN YOU GREW UP?**

I always wanted to be an F-14 pilot just like Maverick from the movie Top Gun.

**WHAT IS THE BEST PART ABOUT YOUR JOB?**

Wearing the Air Force uniform every day and representing our country.

**WHAT DO YOU DO FOR FUN?**

I play football, basketball, baseball, golf and watch a ton of movies with my wife. Pixar movies in 3-D are our favorite.



**" I ALWAYS WANTED TO BE AN F-14 PILOT JUST LIKE MAVERICK FROM THE MOVIE TOP GUN."**

# December PROMOTIONS



MSG RANDOL, JAMES M., 507 LRS  
MSG SALON, PHILBERT A., 507 OSS  
MSG SMITH, JAY J., 507 MXS

**SENIOR MASTER SERGEANT**



TSG JOHNSON, JOSEPH P., 507 OSS  
TSG LEWEY, JERRY C., 507 MDS  
TSG WAY, JOHN D., 507 AMXS

**MASTER SERGEANT**



SSG BRYANT, DEREK A., 507 MXS  
SSG EDWARDS, WILLIAM V., 1 ASF  
SSG JAMES, MICHAEL W., 513 MXS  
SSG JENKINS, JAMES C., TSG 507 MXG  
SSG LUCERO, MICHAEL B., 507 MXS  
SSG MCCRAY, MICHAEL A., 513 AMXS  
SSG OCONNOR, JACOB A., 513 MXS  
SSG OVERSTREET, JASON, 507 SFS  
SSG SHEPARD, MELISSA F., 507 OSS

**TECHNICAL SERGEANT**



SRA BAXLEY, JUSTIN M., 970 AACs  
SRA CLARKE, KRISTOPHER, 507 CES  
SRA GUEST, MARCO D., 507 MDS  
SRA JACKSON, RANDY S., 507 SFS  
SRA MAYHEW, ROBERT H., 507 SFS  
SRA ROWELL, ZACHARY E., 35 CBCS  
SRA WRIGHT, JEFFERY C., 507 SFS

**STAFF SERGEANT**



A1C CORREA, JORGE L., 507 FSS  
A1C WILLIS, JAZMINE S., 72 APS  
A1C ZWIESLER, TAYLOR M., 72 APS

**SENIOR AIRMAN**

# Going out on a limb

by Tech. Sgt. Lauren Gleason

It has been said that in order to succeed we must go out on a limb, because that's where the fruit is.

As a little girl, I didn't take chances. I was terrified of climbing trees. My feet were firmly planted on the ground, while my neighborhood friends pretended to be cats, bounding from branch to branch. I secretly wished my Dad would weld the training wheels to my bike permanently so I would never scrape my knees, but my sister forced me to liberate my bike of its four wheels because she was embarrassed to ride alongside an 8-year old that couldn't ride a bike properly. I always played it safe.

I was raised here in Midwest City, Okla., a town built around an Air Force base, right in the middle of the United States. My grandmother and my parents all retired from the base as civilians with a combined 92 years of federal service between them. Naturally, my safe plan had always been to attend college and then apply for job on base, or get an education degree and teach like many of my friends planned to do. After I enrolled in college, I quickly realized I wanted a full-time job, and once I decided being a bank teller wasn't all I dreamed it would be, I realized I had to stray from my original plan.

Finally, at age 20, I had an epiphany. I wanted to challenge myself and do something meaningful and different--something risky. I wanted to see what else was waiting for me outside of my home state. I wanted to enlist in the Air Force. My mom was concerned for my mental health because she, of course, raised the little girl who despised getting dirty. My dad, a U.S. Marine, said I was making the right choice.

I was single with no kids and I was ready to begin my journey. I made an appointment with a recruiter, and a few months later I boarded a plane bound for Texas to begin basic military training and change the course of my life forever.

Fast forward 12 years as an Airman, and I have lived on three continents and served as a trainee, a dental laboratory technician, a deployer, a letter of counseling recipient, a photojournalist, a master of ceremonies, a supervisor, a mentor, a snow shoveler, a security forces augmentee, a volunteer, a top graduate, a mother, a wife and a wingman.

The Air Force has given me incredible opportunities to grow as a person and expand my horizons, opportunities that I would have completely missed out on by staying in my safety zone. When I made mistakes, countless times, I received counseling and corrective action. Thanks to my mentors and supervisors, I also made an impact: I performed my duties to the best of my abilities and set an example for my two young daughters about how to adapt, overcome, and succeed.

As most other service members, I have met an interesting array of people while serving: Airmen, soldiers, sailors, Marines, coast guardsmen and civilians. We have shared laughs, tears, and the long lines for face painting during mandatory-fun celebrations. It hasn't all been good, and what wasn't good just served to teach us how to accept our shortcomings and hopefully grow from our mistakes.

Some relationships flourish, and some dry up like the punch bowl at the squadron holiday potluck. Now I have friends that I miss all over the world, as well as folks whose names I struggle to recall. I went out on a limb and I collected the fruit. I learned how to work hard, how to obey orders, how to be a leader, but most importantly: I learned how to be me.



*Lauren and Amy, Christmas, 1984*

Above: Tech. Sgt. Lauren Gleason, a public affairs specialist with the 507th Air Refueling Wing, poses for a Christmas snapshot with her sister Amy Kelly in December 1984. Kelly is currently an aircraft mechanic at Tinker Air Force Base, Okla. Right: Gleason waits on a bus before being deployed to Southwest Asia in 2005 in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.



*Headed to the desert, 2005*

# 10TH FLIGHT TEST SQUADRON:

## Troublemakers on a mission

Story by John Parker, Tinker Takeoff Staff Writer

Confident from daily encounters with danger and thousands of hours flying military and civilian aircraft, the pilots and crews of the 10th Flight Test Squadron also happen to be the biggest troublemakers on Tinker Air Force Base.

They'd be out of a job if they weren't.

The 38-member Air Force Reserve Command squadron led by Lt. Col. Scott Wilson serves as the final quality check for planes fresh out of depot maintenance work at the Oklahoma City Air Logistics Complex. After OC-ALC maintainers dismantle KC-135 aerial refueling tankers, B-1 and B-52 bombers and E-3 Airborne Warning and Control System planes - restoring or replacing anything from toggle switches to tail sections - the 10th FTS pilots are the first to fly the like-new birds.

If something wasn't fixed right, they're also the first ones to know about it and deal with sometimes dangerous consequences.

A thousand feet in the air after takeoff on Nov. 1, 2012, squadron pilots flying a newly overhauled B-52 heard a "bang-boom-thud," according to an Air Force accident report. The heavy bomber banked left. Despite a yoke dragged to full right rudder, the Stratofortress's 185-foot wingspan dangerously persisted in a 30- to 45-degree left roll.

About 25 seconds later, another "bang-boom" jolted the plane. The pilots could feel the bomber's flight dynamics change. The lead pilot wheeled the plane back to level flight. After nearly 2 hours in the air, the pilot safely landed the plane using an improvised plan because their misfortune wasn't covered in the B-52's emergency procedures manual of the time.

What had happened was the bomber's right and left inboard flaps, which extend and retract on command from the back of the wings, had fallen off one after the other and plunged into sparse forest a few miles from the base. The flaps' critical retainer plugs were mistakenly never installed during overhaul.

All the aircraft that the 10th's pilots and crew fly after depot maintenance, repair or modification are by definition "unairworthy." It's the squadron's job to fly them first and test all avionics, flight controls and even cause



B-52 Stratofortress pilots with the 10th Flight Test Squadron at Tinker Air Force Base thoroughly check every section of their planes to ensure that they are running correctly. (U.S. Air Force photo/Kelly White)

emergencies to make sure they can be fixed in flight.

Shutting off engines in flight is routine. Descending disturbingly close to "land" on a Tinker runway with no wheels down tests whether the warning alarms will blare.

"When you come here as a new pilot to the unit," Operations Director Lt. Col. Kelly Buck said, "the first time you pull all the fire switches, or you shut down the engines in flight on purpose, it feels a little unsettling because it's stuff that you would never do in a normal unit. But we do that."

Major Josh Thompson, a KC-135 Stratotanker pilot, added, "There's a hydraulic crossover handle that when I went through training they said never touch that thing. We move it about three times a flight, back and forth. We make sure every switch, every system, works. Then that's when it becomes airworthy."

All those system checks, including crew members who test equipment such as refueling boom extenders in KC-135s, mean pilots and crews must be highly experienced. As Reservists they have earned that experience

through active, guard, civilian and reserve experiences in the airframes. The 17 pilots average around 2,000 hours of flying time. Only one of the pilots, navigators and weapon system operators is ranked below major or lieutenant colonel.

Flying more than 400 "functional check flights" annually, the squadron registered a six-year streak of Air Force Flight Safety Awards. Colonel Buck described them as "you-saved-the-plane" citations.

Checking out a plane usually takes more than one flight. Crew members note everything that needs to be fixed and go up again to verify repairs.

"You write it up if a light bulb's burned out - minutiae, things that you'd get shot for on active duty for writing up," Major Thompson said.

The squadron's mission, though, is perfection, Colonel Buck said.

"It's a pride thing," Buck said. "You want when the owner comes to pick it up for them to go, 'Man, everything's working,' because they don't always get that. You can fly a mission with a lot of things not working.

*"Our mission is to return perfect warplanes back to the warfighter as quickly as possible."*

Our mission is to return perfect warplanes back to the warfighter as quickly as possible."

Some of the squadron's tests turn into real emergencies declared to the air control tower.

"I can't remember a week that's gone by when one of our planes hasn't come back as an emergency," Colonel Buck said. "Talk to the firemen. They know that when we're flying they're going to be busy."

Although their jobs mirror those of mythical aircraft-sabotaging gremlins, the pilots say it's significantly less stressful when they degrade a system themselves to perform a test.

"I've shut every engine down every initial flight that I've done here for 10 years, so it doesn't bother you anymore," Colonel Buck said. "We have to fight complacency because we see so many emergencies. We treat everyone as important even though we've seen it over and over again."

Major Thompson said he was attracted to the 10th FTS because it allows active-duty service status even though he's a Reservist. He's also stationed long-term at one location, allowing more time with family.

B-52 pilot Maj. Steve Miracle said he enjoys the work. Working for Air Force Materiel Command, the squadron returns about 120 planes a year to their units.

"Every time we go fly we're doing our mission and making sure that these airplanes we're testing are fit to give back to the user so they can go to war with them," the major said. "I go home every day with pretty high job satisfaction, and I love the kind of flying that we do. It's real hands-on kind of stuff."

The squadron's other work can include ferrying battle-damaged planes from combat theaters to Tinker. They also deliver aircraft to foreign customers. Major Thompson and crew took several trips to France earlier this year delivering refueling tankers because they were so extensively modified that no French pilots were qualified yet to fly them.

"It was purely work. It was terrible," the major said with a grin.

# Angel Tree 2015

Gift giving party to be held Dec. 22, 2015,  
at the Norman Veteran's Center, 9:30 a.m.

## Three ways to contribute to our local Veterans:

### DONATE

Please contact your POC to contribute a monetary donation to be used to purchase Christmas gifts for our Veterans at the center in Norman.

**Deadline: December 16th**



### BUY GIFTS

Pick up a wish list of one of the Veterans and make their holiday wishes come true, and then drop off *unwrapped* gifts to your POC. For a wish list, email [Lauren.Gleason.1@us.af.mil](mailto:Lauren.Gleason.1@us.af.mil) or call 734-3078

**Deadline: December 16th**



### ATTEND THE PARTY

All are welcome to celebrate the season and visit with the Veterans at the party at 9:30 a.m. at the Norman Veteran's Center, located at 1776 East Robinson St. in Norman.

**Party: December 22, 9:30 a.m.**



### Find your POC:

[Wing Staff- TSgt Lauren Gleason, Public Affairs](#)  
[507 MSG- 2nd Lt. James Harbison, Command Section](#)  
[507 OG- Mrs. Trina Walter, Command Section](#)  
[507 MXG- TSgt Herbert Briscoe](#)

[507 MDS- MSgt Andrew Cole](#)  
[513 ACG- SSgt Caleb Wanzer, Public Affairs](#)  
[1 ASF- MSgt April Hampton](#)  
--If your POC is not listed, please contact [TSgt Gleason](#) in PA--



By Ch (Lt. Col.) Dwight Magnus

## CHAPLAIN'S

CORNER



## PEACE ON EARTH

Last night I watched "A Charlie Brown Christmas," a classic that first aired 50 years ago.

For me, the highlight of the show is when Linus quotes a passage from Luke 2, which ends with "Peace on earth, good will to men." As we look around today, it's very difficult to find much peace on earth or good will among men.

Long ago, the cruel miseries caused by the Civil War greatly distressed the beloved American poet, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. With heaviness of spirit, he put his thoughts into words to create his poem "I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day," which was later put to music.

Longfellow's influence on Americans was great since he was the most popular poet of his day, and his words brought fresh courage and renewed faith to many countrymen who read his poem.

The plain, direct wording of the present five stanzas gives this clear message: God is still in command; and in His own time will cause the right to triumph and will bring peace and good will once more. The beautiful chiming bells of Christmas reassure us of this important truth:

*Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:  
"God is not dead, nor doth He sleep;  
The wrong shall fail, the right prevail,  
With peace on earth, good will to men."*

On a personal level, you may also have conflicts and long for peace. The answer for a nation is the same answer for you. God knows your situation, and He will give you peace. May God be real to you, even in the midst of difficult circumstances.

# ENGINE SHOP RUNS FULL THROTTLE

Story and photo by Tech. Sgt. Lauren Gleason



When it comes to experience and dedication, the 507th Propulsion Maintenance shop has what it takes to maintain all of the KC-135 Stratotanker engines in the 507th Air Refueling Wing's inventory, according to Staff Sgt. Linton Riddick, engine manager with the jet engine shop here. The 10-person shop is comprised of five Air Reserve Technicians and five traditional Reservists who are responsible for 40 F108 engines in stock. Each engine has 21 removable parts, for a grand total of 840 components that must be routinely serviced, replaced and inspected. They are also responsible for 20 auxiliary power units, or APUs, with two on each of the 10 aircraft in stock.

"We work hard and play hard, especially since now we are doing double-duty," Riddick said. "When we deploy,

we can perform crew chief duties as well as jet engine maintenance."

Once the guard association ended at Tinker June 30, the crew picked up many duties that had previously been shared between the guardsmen and Reservists.

Engineers are on hand once a week to provide technical advice, as well as when any issues arise.

In most units, tool cribs are a full time additional duty. However, the engine shop maintains its own tool crib, with help from the aerospace ground equipment crew.

As engine manager, Riddick is responsible for tracking parts, managing training and analyzing data.

"I make sure all the parts in the engine

are where they need to be," said Riddick. "Basically, besides the pilots, I'm the first to notice anything out of place on the engine."

The building the shop is housed in is primarily used for training and administrative tasks, because most of the work the jet engine mechanics perform is on the flight line or in a hangar, Riddick said.

"We are pretty much always busy," he said. "We aren't exactly back shop anymore. We are needed on the flight line as much as in here. It requires a lot of work from us and the flight line crew to get jobs done."

Inspections are a necessary aspect of the work in the jet engine shop, said

Staff Sgt. Zach Longest, a jet engine mechanic with the 507th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron.

"Inspections are the biggest thing we do around here," said Longest. "After every 60 flight hours, the engines are inspected for chips. After 120 hours, the fuel filters are inspected. After 1500 hours, bore scope inspections must be performed."

In addition to hourly inspections, every two years the aircraft must undergo an isochronal inspection, where every component of the aircraft is inspected. The team is also responsible for performing engine runs and logging flight hours.

"We have to be precise in everything that we do to the engines," said Riddick.

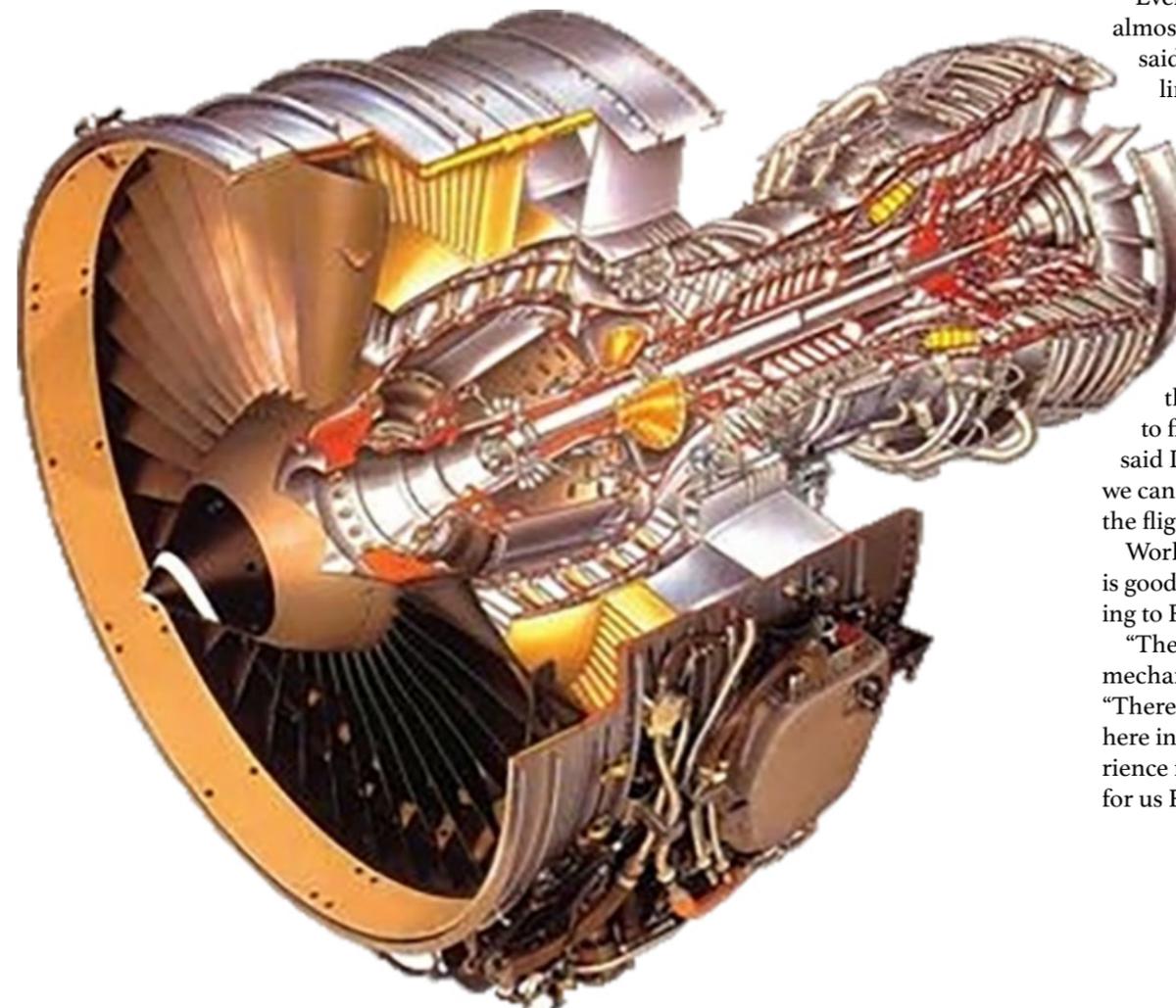
"Quality is paramount. This is a \$3.5 million engine. We have to think about the people who are flying on the jets."

Deployments are a regular occurrence for the Reservists. In addition to regular Reserve deployment rotations, the Airmen frequently volunteer to take deployment slots throughout the year from other bases, filling gaps where they are needed.

"In one deployment rotation, they will put as many hours on an aircraft as we will in a whole year here," said Longest. "You're replacing parts, doing hourly inspections, fixing APU's--constantly. It's non-stop, 12-hour shifts. You are everybody's flight line maintenance there."

The shop is run by highly-experienced technicians, said Longest and Riddick.

*The F108 (CFM56-2) was the first high-bypass engine in the 10-ton class and its sturdy, efficient architecture has allowed CFM to become the most popular engine in the air. It flew first on re-engined Boeing 707 aircraft in 1982 and was soon chosen to re-engine KC-135 tankers for the USAF. (Courtesy illustration/CFM International)*



Traditional Reservist Rick Thompson has 25 years of experience in jet engines through his time in the Navy, Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve. Tech. Sgt. Dustin Staude is the most experienced ART in the shop. Tech. Sgt. Jonathan Mills, an ART, recently joined the crew from Altus AFB. And the newest ART, Senior Airman Tray Dorrell, has been on the team two years. Senior Master Sgt. Rodney Mesenbrink is the shop supervisor.

"If we don't do our job then the jet doesn't take off on time," said Riddick. "If that happens, then we are putting the aircrew that depends on our refueling capabilities in danger."

Morale in the shop is high according to Riddick and Longest, and people who worked there in the past often stop by to check in.

"Everybody knows everybody, because almost everybody's from Oklahoma," said Riddick, a native of North Carolina. "As Reservists, we don't move around as much. We really get to know the area and the people."

Longest said he loves being a jet engine mechanic in the military.

"My favorite part of the job being able to work on high-tech, multi-million dollar military aircraft, and knowing that what I do directly contributes to fighting the war on terrorism," said Longest. "Other than taking off, we can do everything a pilot can do from the flight deck."

Working as a mechanic in the military is good for future job prospects, according to Riddick.

"The future job outlook for engine mechanics is really good," said Riddick. "There's an abundance of jet engine jobs here in Oklahoma, and having the experience from the military is a huge leg-up for us Reservists."

*Top: Tech. Sgt. Dustin Staude, a jet engine mechanic from the 507th Propulsion Maintenance shop, installs fan blades on an F108 engine following a 1500 flight-hour fan blade inspection Sep. 3, 2015, at Tinker Air Force Base, Okla. The engine shop is responsible for maintaining all 40 engines in the 507th Air Refueling Wing's current inventory. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Lauren Gleason*

# Port Dawgs train on TSA procedures

Story and photos by Tech. Sgt. Charles Taylor



Left: Two Airmen from the 72nd Aerial Port Squadron secure pallets of cargo during an exercise during the November unit training assembly at Tinker Air Force Base, Okla. Above: Airman First Class Taylor Zwiesler, an air transportation apprentice from the 72nd Aerial Port Squadron, grabs mobility bags from a fellow Airmen and places them on a flatbed truck to be loaded onto a C-17 Globemaster III as part of a deployment exercise conducted during the November unit training assembly at Tinker Air Force Base, Okla. Cargo is loaded onto the C-17 through a large aft door that accommodates military vehicles and palletized cargo. The C-17 has a maximum payload capacity of 170,900 pounds.

We have all been to civilian airports, where we have to stand in line to go through security checkpoints and get our bags checked in. Sometimes, we may get frustrated by the long wait times, but we wouldn't be able to make it to our destinations without the men and women who are tasked with making trips as safe as possible.

This is what the Reservists of the 72nd Aerial Port Squadron do at Tinker Air Force Base.

The 72nd APS is in charge of loading Airmen and cargo onto military aircraft, such as on space available flights. They also handle the pre-flight briefings and conduct security checks and follow the same procedures as the Transportation Security Administration.

For Reservists tasked to travel, they may not always have the chance to see what the 72nd APS has to do to make sure they board the plane safely.

"When the operation is conducted, it's a brilliant art to watch," said Master Sgt. Brett Neeley, the non-commissioned-officer-in-charge of Passenger Service for the 72nd APS. "It's really a dynamic process."

In order for these Airmen to complete the tasks of loading and unloading flights, they must go through extensive training that includes learning how to operate stair steppers and baggage conveyers, along with forklifts to load cargo. They also have to maintain TSA policies, which can change very quickly.

"TSA training happens every drill, because we realize policies could change," said Neeley. "With our personnel coming out two days a month, we want to keep that fresh in their minds."

With all of the training that is being conducted, there also comes a time standard where things have to be accomplished. While meeting time is

important, the balance comes in when discussing safety.

"We try to meet our times, but we will not compromise safety for our personnel or the aircraft," said Neeley.

As is the case with most Reservists, there is a lot to learn in a short amount of time.

"The goal is when the Airmen leave from UTA weekends, we want them to leave thinking they accomplished a lot," said Neeley. "If they don't, then we failed them as NCOICs."

At the end, the goal is to make sure the Reservists can use the training for the military and beyond.

"The training is not only for the Air Force, but it's necessary for the member's growth as they progress in their own careers outside of the Air Force," said Neeley. "It's about how they can capture the information they learned to make themselves more marketable on the outside."



Airmen from the 507th Air Refueling Wing Force Support Squadron Services Sustainment Flight serve food to Ch. (Capt.) John Weston and Tech. Sgt. Patrick Garrison of 507th Air Refueling Wing Chapel Services during a field kitchen training exercise Nov. 7, 2015, at Tinker Air Force Base, Okla. The kitchen is designed to provide deployed personnel food at remote and undeveloped sites. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Chelsea Thomas)

## Services flight cooks up field training: Donates excess to local homeless shelter

Story by Senior Airman Jeffery Dahlem

The 507th Air Refueling Wing Force Support Squadron Services Sustainment Flight held a field kitchen exercise on the 35th Combat Communications Squadron's compound Nov. 7, 2015, here.

The Services Sustainment Flight invited several units across Tinker Air Force Base to enjoy the food prepared by the field kitchen staff, including fried chicken, various vegetables, and desserts.

The exercise was intended to help train their Airmen in properly establishing food services down range, from unloading cargo pallets to running a fully functional field kitchen.

"We join the Air Force Reserve to do a specific job, and we end up getting bogged down with the minutiae

*"It's nice to be able to help out."*

of our computer-based training requirements or paperwork and things like that," said Chief Master Sergeant David Dickson, 507th Mission Support Group Superintendent. "So, on a normal UTA, it's rare that Airmen get to perform their function that they joined the Air Force for. It's a huge morale boost for them to actually perform their job and they did it very well."

Exercise team leaders Master Sgt. Mondrey Ramsey and Master Sgt. Tamika Ferguson contacted a local charity that helps feed the homeless in the Oklahoma City metropolitan area to the remaining food.

"They were grateful and it was a good way to not only get some training done but to reach out to the local community," said Ramsey. "It's nice to be able to help out."

# BASH team keeps 'em flying

Story and photo by Kimberly Woodruff, *Tinker Takeoff Staff Writer*

Every spring and fall, tens of thousands of birds converge on Oklahoma during their migrations, leaving the skies and ground looking similar to a scene out of the 1963 Hitchcock classic, "The Birds."

At Tinker Air Force Base, the Bird Aircraft Strike Hazard group, along with the 72nd Air Base Wing Civil Engineer Directorate's Natural Resources office, is charged with keeping the base flightline free from birds that could damage flying aircraft.

"We rely heavily on the Natural Resources office and their expertise concerning the birds and their migratory patterns," said Lt. Col. Beth Dittmer, chief of flight safety with the 72nd Air Base Wing Flight Safety Office. "Birds can bring down an aircraft, even large aircraft like the ones we fly here at Tinker. The E-3 community is especially aware of this after experiencing the 1995 Yukla-27 crash in Alaska that killed all 24 crew members."

According to Colonel Dittmer, Tinker has recorded 50 non-damaging bird strikes this year. Of those, 14 were on base, 15 were outside of Tinker's air space but involved Tinker aircraft and the other 21 occurred during flight and weren't noticed until after landing. That's not too bad, considering aircraft flew over Tinker's airfield 34,348 times this past fiscal year.

"In two years there has been just one bird strike that caused significant damage at Tinker," said Colonel Dittmer. "The strike caused Class-C damage with \$118,000 to an E-3."

Tinker is located along the central flyway where millions of migratory birds traverse Oklahoma each year, according to Ray Moody, a Natural Resources biologist with 72nd ABW/CE. Migratory birds are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 (50 CFR Part 21) and others. Biologists have documented 209 bird species on Tinker through class and non-class



The Tinker Bird Aircraft Strike Hazard group keeps the airfield free from birds that can cause damage to flying aircraft. Their task is much more difficult in the spring and fall, when migratory birds fly through Tinker's air space.

specific surveys.

Tinker also manages its avian species under the BASH Program. The 72nd ABW Safety Office is primarily responsible for BASH and the Natural Resources Program acts as liaison to agencies and consultant to the BASH group chaired by the 72nd ABW commander.

Mr. Moody said activity is typically elevated during sunrise and sunset and their numbers are counted during migration. "When the numbers around the base and area lakes increase, we keep the flying units informed," he said.

Since 2001, Tinker has partnered and worked under cooperative agreement and permits with USDA Wildlife Service in conducting an integrated bird/wildlife damage management program. The 72nd ABW/CE holds the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service depredation permit.

"Geese are unwelcomed visitors and if not regularly hazed and removed can increase to numbers which pose aircraft

safety concerns," said Mr. Moody.

"Gulls often frequent the Tinker airfield, particularly during migration and after precipitation events, when forage is found on runways. Another surprising visitor to the area lakes during the migration season are American white pelicans. These birds which flock in groups of 200 to 400 birds can be a significant threat to aircrews."

Mr. Moody added that in the spring egrets and herons often try to establish rookeries, or nesting locations, near Tinker. During those times, thousands of birds can migrate across Tinker at low altitudes. In the past, aircraft in Tinker's flight pattern has struck egrets; therefore, active management for these species and their habitat on and off base are conducted. Specific information about their control and other species are addressed in the Bird-Aircraft Strike Hazard Plan (Tinker AFB Plan 91-212) and Animal Damage Management Cooperative Agreement and Work Plans.

# CHRISTMAS

December 24-25 | Holiday Hours

FSS ADMIN OFFICE	CLOSED	FAMILY CHILD CARE	CLOSED 24 - 27 DEC
TINKER CLUB	CLOSED	CDC EAST	CLOSED
ROSIES LOUNGE	CLOSED	CDC WEST	CLOSED
DINNING ROOM LUNCH	CLOSED	CDC SOUTH	CLOSED
JOHN IVORY LOUNGE	CLOSED	YOUTH CENTER	
BARBERSHOP	CLOSED	YOUTH MEMBERSHIP	CLOSED 25 - 27 DEC
CASHIERS CAGE	CLOSED	CLOSES AT 6 PM ON 24 DEC	
TINKER GOLF COURSE	CLOSED 25 DEC	SCHOOL AGE	CLOSED 25 - 27 DEC
MULLIGAN'S GRILL	CLOSED	CLOSES AT 6 PM ON 24 DEC	
TINKER LANES	CLOSED	RESOURCE & REFERRAL	CLOSED
PIN DECK	CLOSED	AIRMAN & FAMILY READINESS	CLOSED
ARTS & CRAFTS	CLOSED 20 DEC - 4 JAN	NAF ACCOUNTING	CLOSED
GIFT CORNER, BLDG 3001	CLOSED 20 DEC - 4 JAN	CASHIERS CAGE	CLOSED
AUHTO HOBBY SHOP	CLOSED 20 DEC - 5 JAN	RECYCLING	CLOSED
ITT	CLOSED 20 DEC - 4 JAN	LODGING	OPEN 24/7
OUTDOOR RECREATION	CLOSED 20 DEC - 4 JAN	MPS	CLOSED
HRO	CLOSED		
ISZARD POOL	CLOSED		
FAM CAMP	OPEN 24/7		
CAFE' 3001	CLOSED		
JAVA CITY	CLOSED		
SUPERFORTRESS	CLOSED		
SKYTRAIN	CLOSED		
IRON DUKE	MICRO MART		
STRATOLIFTER	MICRO MART		
JAYHAWK C-STORE	MICRO MART		
JAYHAWK MOBILE TRUCK	CLOSED		
JAVA CITY BLDG 9001	CLOSED		
GERRITY FITNESS	CLOSED		
TINKER FITNESS ANNEX	24/7 CAC ACCESS		
3705 FITNESS	24/7 CAC ACCESS		
LIBRARY	CLOSED 24 - 26 DEC		
VANEWAY DINING			
BREAKFAST	0630-0800		
BRUNCH/LUNCH	1100-1400		
DINNER	1600-1800		



# Reserve Gold hits new high

Intramural football team's best performance in 15 years

by Tech. Sgt. Jeff Inferrere, Reserve Gold Quarterback



Intramural flag football team, Reserve Gold, poses for a team photo before facing off against 552nd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron in the league's championship game. Photo by Staff Sgt. Caleb Wanzer

After completing a 6-1 regular season, the Reserve Gold flag football team, comprised of members of the 513th Air Control Group and one member of the 507th Air Refueling Wing, stormed into the fall playoffs and had its most successful year ever, reaching its first base championship game. During the playoff run in which the team went 5-2, Gold defeated--for the first time ever--their arch rivals Reserve White and the 72nd Med Group, before running out of steam (and healthy players) in the title game, losing to eventual champs the 552 AMXS. The 11-3 win-loss record and 2nd place finish was the best in

the team's 18 year history. Contributing to Gold's success were: Robert Atkins, Ryan Clary, Thomas Vann, Rob Doty, Jay Harris, Randy Schell, Bill Dykes, Joe Huizar, Tom Carter, Dan Gibb, Jeff Inferrere, Jim Matthey, Adrian Mack, Joe Brown, Ralph Hawkins and T.J. Milliken. Vann, Matthey and Mack were unavailable for the championship game due to injuries. The team suits up again for the spring season which begins on March 7, 2016. As a side-note, four members of the 513th Air Control Group play for Reserve White: Jim Gasaway, Jeremy Allen, Brian VanCuren and Patrick Ridlon.

## SPORTS NEWS

Expect to see Sooners in College Football Playoff



By Tech. Sgt. Charles Taylor  
507th Sports Reporter Extraordinaire

Brett Deering/ Getty Images

Before I get started with this article, I want to say I am a huge Texas Longhorns fan. So naturally, I don't like the Oklahoma Sooners--at all. With that said, I try to be as objective and fair as possible, and I come to the 507th Air Refueling Wing bringing nothing but praise for Oklahoma's football team. The Big 12 conference, who didn't have a team in last season's version of the College Football Playoff, should have no problem getting a team in there this season. That team resides in Norman.

There are many reasons why the Sooners should be in the CFP, but let's start with the obvious: With a 58-23 victory over Oklahoma State in the annual Bedlam game, Oklahoma became the outright champions of the conference. Last year, Baylor and TCU were tied with the same record and were declared co-champions of the conference, even though Baylor beat TCU 61-58 head-to-head. The fact the Big 12 does not have a conference championship game, combined with what

Ohio State did to Wisconsin in the Big Ten title game, led to the Big 12 getting left out in the cold.

The Sooners have a record of 11-1, with the only loss occurring to Texas in the Red River Showdown in Dallas October 10. A lot of people would say this is a bad loss considering Texas will not make a bowl game (a very painful fact to admit). Even with the loss, the overall body of work for Oklahoma can be compared with any team. The Sooners beat five opponents who were ranked in the top 25 at game time. That includes Baylor, who was ranked fourth at the time, and Oklahoma State, who was ranked ninth. Another impressive aspect is the fact both of those wins came while on the road.

When the new rankings came out December 1, Oklahoma sat in the third position in the four-team playoff system. The other playoff teams as of current standings are: Clemson (first), Alabama (second) and Iowa (fourth). All of those

teams have championship games in their respective conferences to play December 5, and the next teams in line are Michigan State and Ohio State. Iowa and Michigan State are playing for the Big Ten title, which means one of those teams will fall. Even though Ohio State has the same record as the Sooners, they won't even win their own conference. The teams below Ohio State all have two losses with the exception of tenth-ranked North Carolina, who has one loss and will play Clemson in the Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC) championship game.

Simply put, Oklahoma deserves to be in the College Football Playoff. While it would be nice to see a championship game in the Big 12 again, the body of work should be more than enough to offset that. Not that I'm happy about it, but there is no choice but to give OU the credit.

Col. Brian Davis, 507th Air Refueling Wing commander, shakes hands with 507th Civil Engineer Squadron commander Maj. Kenneth Joseph before taking a trip to Fire Station 1 in a P-19 Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting apparatus Dec. 6, 2015, at Tinker Air Force Base, Okla. Davis toured the facility with the 507th CES fire fighters to see the equipment they work with and to learn more about the day-to-day operations. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Lauren Gleason

