

ON-FINAL

APRIL 2018

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE 507TH AIR REFUELING WING



507TH ARW REFUELS BLUE ANGELS

OPTED INTO BRS? DON'T FORGET THIS STEP

COVER

BLUE ANGELS REFUEL WITH 507TH ARW

507th Air Refueling Wing Reserve Citizen Airmen refuel an F/A-18 Hornet from the U.S. Navy Blue Angels Aerial Demonstration team March 19, 2018. All seven jets from the team were refueled in flight while on their way home to Pensacola, Fla.

Cover photo by Tech. Sgt. Samantha Mathison

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RESERVE

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WING COMMANDER
Col. Douglas Gullion

VICE WING COMMANDER
Col. Dana Nelson

WING COMMAND CHIEF
Chief Master Sgt. David Dickson

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER
2nd Lt. Callie McNary

SUPERINTENDENT
Master Sgt. Grady Epperly

OPERATIONS CHIEF
Mrs. Lauren Gleason

NCOIC, COMMAND
INFORMATION
Tech. Sgt. Samantha Mathison



507 ARW PUBLIC AFFAIRS

7435 Reserve Rd, Suite 114
Tinker Air Force Base, Okla. 73145

Phone: (405) 734-3078

Email: 507ARW.PA2@US.AF.MIL

URL: WWW.507ARW.AFRC.AF.MIL

LAYOUT BY TECH. SGT. SAMANTHA MATHISON

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507TH ARW WELCOMES GERMAN DELEGATION



(U.S Air Force photo/Tech. Sgt. Samantha Mathison)

Mr. Boris Ruge, Minister and Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany, Washington D.C., visited the 507th Air Refueling Wing and the 513th Air Control Group at Tinker Air Force Base, Oklahoma, March 26, 2018.

Mr. Bernd Reindl, Deputy Consul General at the German Consulate in Houston, Mr. Daniel Andrich, President and CEO of the Office of the Representative of German Industry and Trade, Col. Michael Trautermann, Air Attache at the German Embassy, Washington D.C., and Mr. Jeremy Tubb, Honorary Consul for Germany in Oklahoma, joined Ruge for the tour of the 507th ARW and the 513th ACG. *(Continued on p. 5)*



(U.S Air Force photo/Tech. Sgt. Samantha Mathison)



(U.S Air Force photo/Tech. Sgt. Samantha Mathison)



(Continued from p. 4)

Col. Douglas Gullion, 507th ARW commander, and Col. Laurie Dickson, 513th Air Control Group commander, provided the German delegation with respective mission briefings and tours of both the KC-135R Stratotanker and the E-3 Sentry aircraft. The 513th ACG consists of approximately 400 personnel and is the only Air Force Reserve unit that maintains and operates the E-3 Sentry, an Airborne Warning and Control System aircraft.

Lt. Col. Kenneth Humphrey, 507th Operations Group commander and Col. Travis Caughlin, 507th Maintenance Group commander, discussed the challenges and complexities of managing day-to-day operations at Oklahoma's largest Air Force Reserve flying unit.



(U.S Air Force photo/Tech. Sgt. Lauren Gleason)



(U.S Air Force photo/Tech. Sgt. Samantha Mathison)

Opted into BRS?

Don't forget this important step

By Beth Perry, Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board



The Blended Retirement System combines servicemember's traditional legacy retirement pension with distributions from the Thrift Savings Plan, creating a portable retirement option. The BRS will grandfather in servicemembers serving as of December 2017 under the legacy retirement system. No one currently serving will be automatically switched to the BRS, according to the DoD's Military Compensation website. (U.S. Air Force illustration/Staff Sgt. Alexandre Montes)

A major benefit of the Blended Retirement System (BRS) is the free money you can now get from your service: Each time you contribute to your Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) retirement account, your service will match it up to 5 percent of your pay.

But your contributions are not automatic if you opted into BRS – they don't happen unless you choose to make them. And if you skip that important step, you risk missing out on hundreds of dollars in matching this year alone.

Contributing at least 5 percent of your basic pay is the only way to get the full match available to you. (For example, five percent for an E-2 is about \$90 per month.) Now that you've opted in, your service created a TSP account for you (if you didn't already have one) and automatically contributes an amount equal to 1 percent of your basic pay to it. But the other 4 percent depends on you taking action.

Got five minutes? If you haven't already, log into your payroll system to get the benefit you've earned: more free money just for contributing. You'll also need to decide whether to make Roth or traditional contributions, and our short video "Is Roth Right for Me?" explains the difference.

Army, Air Force, Navy, Marines* (active duty and Ready Reserve): Use myPay to contribute to your TSP account.

Choose whatever amount you're comfortable with, but contributing at least 5 percent of your basic pay is the only way to get the full match you've earned from your service.

1 Log into myPay. From the Main menu, select "Traditional TSP and Roth TSP."

2 Next, you'll see two columns: "Contributions from Traditional TSP" and "Contributions from Roth TSP." You can choose either one or both.

3 Select the percentages you would like to save from your basic, special, incentive, and bonus pay.

4 Click the "Save" button at the bottom of the screen. If you need help, call myPay at 1-888-332-7411 and select option 5, then option 2.

2 LEADERS ASSUME COMMAND

Lt. Col. Kenneth Humphrey and Lt. Col. Jenette Milburn assumed commands of the 507th Operations Group and the 465th Air Refueling Squadron, respectively, March 4, 2018, at Tinker Air Force Base, Okla. Col. Douglas Gullion, 507th Air Refueling Wing commander, entrusted command of the 507th OG to Humphrey during an assumption of command ceremony, by handing over the operations group guidon. Humphrey, in turn, then handed command of the 465th ARS to Milburn by passing her the 465th ARS guidon.



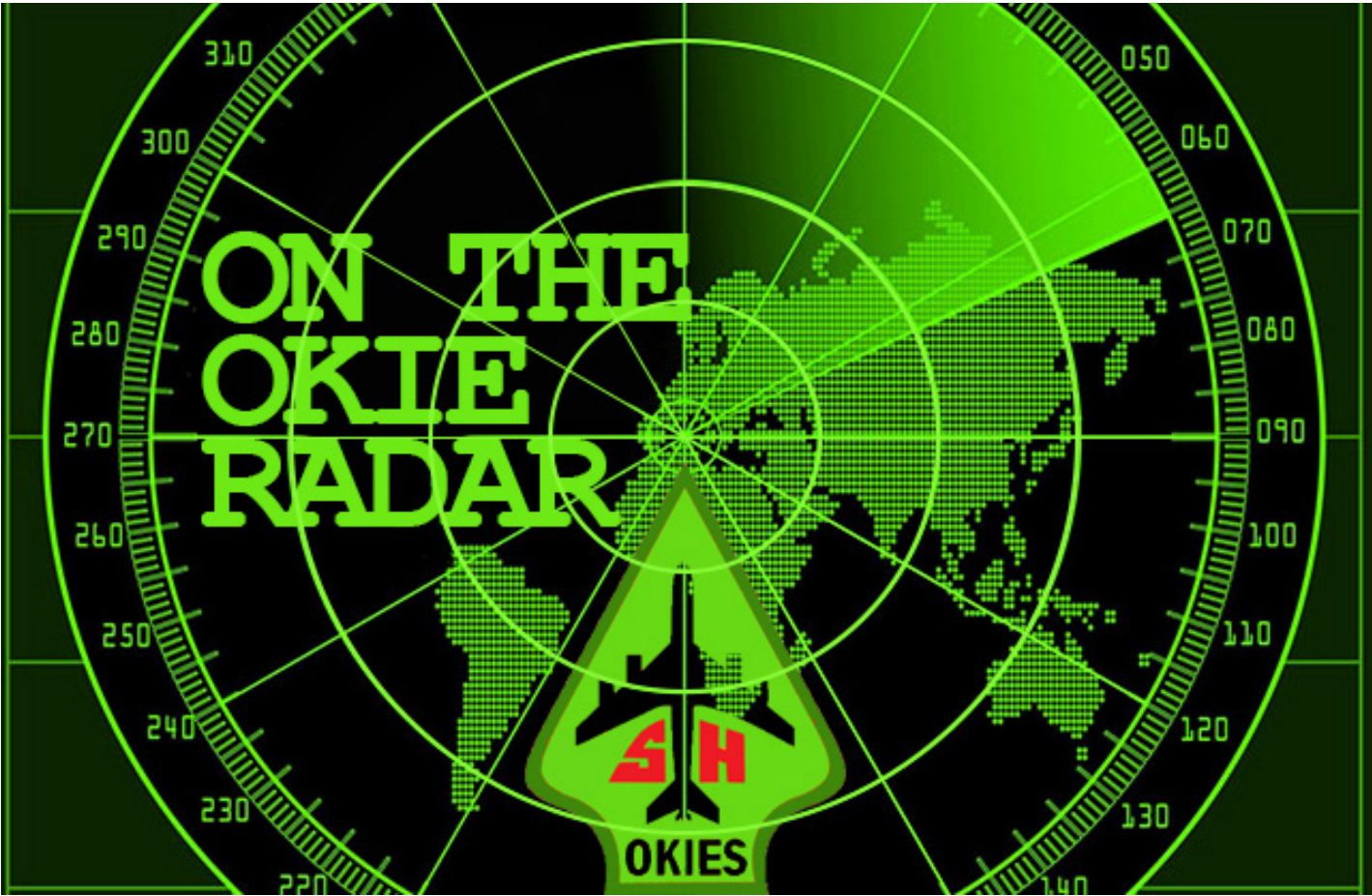
(U.S. Air Force photos/Master Sgt. Grady Epperly)



COMMANDER'S NOTE:

"My goals are to continue supporting the 507th mission and gain the trust and respect of our folks by being as authentic as possible. It's an absolute honor to be afforded this incredible opportunity to return to the unit I grew up in, and given the chance to represent it as a commander. This is a tight knit team that has always given our country and unit 110% when asked; whether it's during times of deployment or home station training. I've been extremely fortunate to have great friends, family, and mentors guide me and, at times, tell me when to be quiet. I won't always be right, but thanks to the incredible group of folks that work with me and accept my shortcomings, I hope to remain real."

~Lt. Col. Kenneth Humphrey, 507th Operations Group commander



APRIL “SUPER UTA” APR. 5-8 CC CALL @1500 - APR. 8 CIV OF QTR DUE - APR. 15 CIV ALL CALL @1000 - APR. 25	JULY UTA JULY 14-15 (if needed) CIV OF QTR DUE - JULY 15
	AUGUST UTA AUG. 4-5
MAY UTA MAY 5-6	SEPTEMBER UTA SEP. 8-9
JUNE UTA JUNE 2-3	OCTOBER UTA OCT. 6-7 CIV OF QTR DUE - JULY 15
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Blood test for detecting brain injuries cleared by FDA

Military Health System Communications

Brain injuries can happen from a fall, while in combat or during training exercises. Thanks in part to research funded by the Defense Department and the Army, Banyan Biomarkers has created the first-ever brain trauma blood test. On Feb. 14, 2018, the Food and Drug Administration cleared marketing of the Banyan Biomarkers' Brain Trauma Indicator.

The BTI can identify two brain-specific protein markers, called Ubiquitin Carboxy-terminal Hydrolase-L1 and Glial Fibrillary Acidic Protein. These proteins rapidly appear in the blood and are elevated 12 hours following an incident where a head injury occurs and can signify if there is bleeding in the brain. The two protein markers won't be elevated if your brain is uninjured or if you have a mild traumatic brain injury, otherwise known as a concussion.

"When these proteins are elevated, there may be blood in the brain," said Kathy Helmick, acting director of the Defense and Veterans Brain Injury Center. "A hematoma, or blood in the brain, may indicate a more serious brain injury has occurred, which could require rapid evacuation for neurosurgery to remove a clot in the brain."

The first thing a doctor tries to rule out with suspected brain injury is the potential for serious complications, like losing consciousness, going into a coma or death. According to the research results

(U.S. Air Force photo illustration/Chris McCann)

and FDA clearance, the blood test can help medical professionals determine the need for computed tomography scans in patients suspected of having a concussion. It also can help prevent unnecessary radiation exposure for patients.

Prior to discovering these biological protein markers, medical professionals had to rely on symptom reporting and other more subjective means to evaluate patients with few signs of more serious head injury.

"This technology helps us identify red flags after you suspect a head injury so that you can get the person to definitive care," Helmick explained. "Most times, the blood test will be negative and the medical provider will continue with a concussion evaluation."

Lt. Col. Kara Schmid said Army Medical Research and Materiel Command will "begin limited user testing with the device in the first quarter of fiscal year 2019." Schmid is a project manager for the Neurotrauma and Psychological Health Project Management Office at the Army Medical Materiel Development Activity. "Improvements could make the device more supportable by the military health system."

The DoD has been seeking a method for diagnosing and evaluating TBIs in service members for over a decade. According to DVBIC, over 375,000 service members have been diagnosed with TBI since 2000. Approximately 82 percent of those TBI cases are classified as a concussion.

According to Dr. Kelley Brix, branch chief for interagency research and development at the Defense Health Agency, the need for diagnosing milder forms of brain injury sparked research questions that were funded as part of a greater TBI research portfolio.

"The research question became centered on if the brain releases anything detectable into the blood stream when there is damage," said Brix. "The answer is yes." *(Story continued online)*

Click [HERE](#) to read more





A CLOSER

Staff Sgt. Hunter Conatser

**507TH CIVIL ENGINEER SQUADRON
HEAVY EQUIPMENT OPERATOR**

WHAT IS A LITTLE KNOWN FACT ABOUT YOU?

I know way too much about makeup. My wife is a makeup artist, so I take photos of her work and support her hobby.

WHAT DO YOU DO FOR FUN?

I work on my 1997 Mazda Miata. I'm doing a complete rebuild of it now. Engine, suspension -- everything.

AS A KID, WHAT WAS YOUR DREAM JOB?

I wanted to be a pilot. I grew up in Midwest City, right outside of the base.

WHAT IS YOUR CAREER GOAL?

Eventually I would like to earn my commission in the Air Force.

WHAT IS THE BEST PART OF YOUR JOB?

On the military side, I enjoy operating heavy machinery, especially bulldozers.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE MOVIE?

"The Martian" with Matt Damon. It's interesting to watch him "science" his way out of a bad situation.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO NOMINATE SOMEONE FOR THE NEXT 'CLOSER LOOK'?

[EMAIL YOUR SUBMISSION HERE](#)

Staff Sgt. Hunter Conatser stands for a photograph April 5, 2018, at Tinker Air Force Base, Okla. (U.S. Air Force photo/Tech. Sgt. Lauren Gleason)



COMMENTARY

THREE KEYS TO LEADERSHIP

By Maj. Damien Miller

507th Logistics Readiness Squadron commander

Joining the 507 ARW less than two years ago was one of the best decisions I've made in my career. The 'Okie' family has been amazing to my wife and I, and we're extremely grateful to be a part of this wing. The balancing tone set by our wing's leadership is one where we take care of our people and they, in turn, take care of the mission. It sounds simple enough, but those of us who've been around long enough know that's not always the case.

The key characteristics and tools I consider essential to successful leadership are communication, professionalism, and a strong emphasis on chain of command.



COMMUNICATION

A wise man once said it's better to over-communicate than to under communicate. If you think about it, wouldn't you rather have the information and not need it at the time rather than need the information and not have it? In order to be successful in our line of work, everyone within the organization needs to know the commander's intent to do their part and make it happen.

Use the five W's (who, what, where, when, and why) to ensure you know all the details of the situation to include, most importantly, the why behind the situation. Gathering the details appropriately requires good communication between all parties involved.

PROFESSIONALISM

Professionalism is another key component to sound leadership. We've all heard the phrase, 'lead by example'; that requires being professional no matter where you are in the chain of command. Treat everyone with the same respect and courtesy you would provide a colonel or a chief. Let's face it, we all like to receive professional treatment in our work environment, but I challenge you to continue that professional behavior in any situation, and you'll be surprised how well it is received.

“Professionalism is not a label you give yourself, it's a description you hope others will apply to you.”

~David Maister

CHAIN OF COMMAND

Finally, the chain of command is essential for a military organization to carry out its mission; it exists to protect everyone within it. In order to follow your chain of command, one needs to be aware of who's in their chain of command and the importance of why it exists. The member also should know where they fit in the chain in order to be able to react effectively to whatever the situation is, positive or negative.

We've all heard the phrase, "it's not what you know but who you know." It's important to know the appropriate level within the chain at which to solve problems or to recognize people for their hard work.

In conclusion, through good sound communication flow, professionalism across the board and utilizing the chain of command appropriately, we can maintain good order and discipline.

All three are vital to succeeding in our line of work. It's an honor to serve with each and every one of you who volunteered to defend the constitution and our way of life.

April PROMOTIONS



SENIOR MASTER SERGEANT
DERIC NIXON, 507 CES



MASTER SERGEANT
JOSHUA RYAN, 513 MXS



TECHNICAL SERGEANT
JEREMY SERITT, 513 AMXS
JESSICA PFEFFER, 507 MDS



STAFF SERGEANT
LONDON RUSSELL, 507 MDS
RIKKI DURWARD, 513 MXS
VALERIE BENOIT, 513 MXS
ILYA KOFANOV, 507 MXS
TRAY DORRELL, 507 MXS



SENIOR AIRMAN
THOMAS LANGDON, 507 AMXS



AIRMAN FIRST CLASS
ELIZA JOHNSON, 507 LRS



AIRMAN
DEVERON BLACK, 513 MXS
MITCH MELCHOR, 970 AACS



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507th *refuels the*

Blue Angels

(U.S. Navy photo courtesy of the Blue Angels Aerial Demonstration team)

507th Air Refueling Wing Reserve Citizen Airmen from Tinker Air Force Base, Okla., refueled seven F/A-18 Hornets from the U.S. Navy Blue Angels Aerial Demonstration team March 19, 2018. The Blue Angels returned home to Pensacola, Fla., after three months of training at El Centro Naval Air Facility, Calif.



(U.S. Air Force photo/Tech. Sgt. Samantha Mathison)

JOB ANNOUNCEMENTS

WING INSPECTION TEAM MEMBER

The 507th Air Refueling Wing Inspection Team is looking for a subject matter expert whose skills, talents and abilities may serve to improve the commander's inspection program.

The 507th ARW WIT is comprised of over 50 subject matter experts who inspect on behalf of the Wing Commander.

The 507th ARW Inspector General Inspections office needs WIT to conduct inspections, providing their technical knowledge and know-how to accomplish more accurate inspection results.

If you are the best of the best and want to make a difference, talk to your commander about joining the Wing Inspection Team and making the 507th Air Refueling Wing stronger. Not only will you be making a difference within your wing, you will also have opportunities to continue learning about the bigger picture of our wing's mission.

If you have any questions, call the IGI office at 734-4259.



PUBLIC AFFAIRS BROADCAST JOURNALIST

The 507th Air Refueling Wing Public Affairs office is looking for a broadcast journalist.

Responsible for recording, documenting and producing videos, broadcast journalists represent and communicate the interests of the Air Force. These specialists have a wide array of responsibilities and do everything from writing and copy editing and serving as on-camera announcers to maintaining the archive library to ensure information is saved for future generations.



QUALIFICATIONS

- Traditional Reservist/E-5 slot
- Knowledge of basic communication theory
- Favorable evaluation of a voice audition
- Absence of any speech impediment and ability to read aloud and speak distinctly
- Interview required
- Normal color vision

If you are interested in applying, please contact the Public Affairs office at 734-3078.

MISSION SUPPORT GROUP COMMANDER **PROMOTION**

LT. COL. RICHARD ROPAC, 507TH MISSION SUPPORT GROUP COMMANDER, PROMOTES TO COLONEL DURING A CEREMONY AT THE OKLAHOMA HISTORY CENTER IN OKLAHOMA CITY MARCH 3, 2018. **CONGRATULATIONS!**



(U.S. Air Force photos/Tech. Sgt. Lauren Gleason)



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Master Sgt.
Brandy Venson
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ANDROID USERS

ON-FINAL takes third place in Air Force media contest for PDF Publication 2017



Click the image below to read the
2017 award-winning edition:



Remembering our own: Tinker Airmen among 168 victims

Story by Kimberly Woodruff

The bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City on April 19, 1995, claimed 168 lives, including two young Airmen from Tinker Air Force Base.

Airman 1st Class Lakesha Richardson Levy from the 72nd Medical Group and Airman 1st Class Cartney McRaven from the 32nd Combat Communications Squadron were inside the building when the Ryder truck exploded at 9:02 a.m.

AIRMAN FIRST CLASS LAKESHA RICHARDSON LEVY

Airman Levy, who grew up in New Orleans, had been married for a year and, according to her mother, was at the Murrah building to get a new Social Security card. Airman Levy was married to Cory Levy and they had a son, Cory Levy II.

"Lakesha was a very humorous and family oriented person," said the Airman's mother, Constance Favorite. "She was a caretaker to everyone."

Airman Levy's family attended her graduation from basic training. Ms. Favorite said Lakesha put on her hat and marched so proudly, just like the other Airmen.

"Lakesha used to say, 'I'm not going to be something — I'm going to be somebody,'" said Ms. Favorite.

And she was somebody to the Airmen who knew her. One of them was Carlos Ortiz, who met Airman Levy in basic training. Airman Levy knew a secret Mr. Ortiz carried; he was gay in the military when it was not all right to be gay.

"She once pulled me aside and said, 'If anyone bothers you just let me know and I'll take care of it,'" said Mr. Ortiz. "I knew I immediately found a friend ... for life. I will always remember her for that."

AIRMAN FIRST CLASS CARTNEY MCRAVEN

According to retired Chief Master Sgt. Kimberly Harris, former superintendent of the 32nd Combat Communications Squadron in 1995, Airman McRaven was a model Airman. In fact, she was the 1994 Group Airman of the Year.

Former 32nd Combat Communications Squadron commander, then Maj. Vincent Valdespino, also speaks highly of Airman McRaven.

"Cartney had a can-do attitude, and she was able to make things happen," said Mr. Valdespino. "I always liked and respected that about her."

Mr. Valdespino got to know Airman McRaven during their deployment to Haiti from November 1994 to April 1995.

Airman McRaven had just returned and her fiancé, Shane, had also returned from a deployment to Bosnia. The couple married on April 15, four days before the bombing. Airman McRaven went to the Murrah building to change her name.

"I got to know her family, and we would meet with them every day," said Mr. Valdespino. "But one day we showed up in our dress blues and her mom knew."

Airman McRaven was one of the last victims to be located amongst the rubble.

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A 507th Air Refueling Wing KC-135R Stratotanker undergoes flight preparations at Tinker Air Force Base, Okla., March 19, 2018. On this particular flight mission, Reserve Citizen Airmen refueled seven F/A-18 Hornets from the U.S. Navy Blue Angels Aerial Demonstration team while on their way home to Pensacola, Fla. (U.S. Air Force photo/Tech. Sgt. Samantha Mathison)