

RABBIT TALES



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This UTA in History

November 3, 1903 – With the support of the U.S. government, Panama issues a declaration of independence from Colombia.

In 1903, the Hay-Herrán Treaty was signed with Colombia, granting the United States use of the Isthmus of Panama in exchange for financial compensation. The U.S. Senate ratified the treaty, but the Colombian Senate, fearing a loss of sovereignty, refused. In response, President Theodore Roosevelt gave tacit approval to a rebellion by Panamanian nationalists, which began on November 3, 1903. On November 6, the United States recognized the Republic of Panama, and on November 18 the Hay-Bunau-Varilla Treaty was signed with Panama, granting the United States exclusive and permanent possession of the Panama Canal Zone.

November 4, 1927 – 10 days of extremely heavy rain in New England lead to flooding; the floods went on to kill 200 people and cause millions of dollars in damages. Vermont's Green Mountain region was particularly hard hit by the storm.

The Winooski River in Vermont was most affected by the rain—major flooding occurred all along the river's path. Thousands of people had to flee their homes as the waters rose. Many small towns were uninhabitable for weeks after the flooding began. In total, it was estimated that \$28 million in damages were incurred.

Congrats, 2LT Rollins!

2nd Lieutenant Lilly Rollins, formerly TSgt Rollins, was recently commissioned and is headed to Airborne Weapons Officer school. Expect to see her around the 970th after she graduates next Fall.



Caption This!

Top response from last month:

~ "So stealthy it leaves a rain shadow that looks like an F-15, Lt Col XXXX prepares to board the E-99 AWACS II."

–Col. Jeff McGalliard



November's Caption This! Photo.

To submit a caption for this month's photo, email TSgt Sandra Hatton (sandra.hatton@tinker.af.mil).



December's Caption This! Photo.

KC Chiefs Tickets Selling at ITT

ITT is proud to be partnering with the Kansas City Chiefs to sell tickets to their upcoming Military Appreciation Day as the Chiefs take on the Bengals on Nov. 18 at Arrowhead Stadium.

Preorder your tickets now at ITT, located in Bldg 478. Tickets are on sale for \$30 each. ITT will be taking orders through Nov. 9.

The MX Perspective

by Lt. Col. Alan Priest
513 ACG Director of MX

Greetings from the desk of Lt Col Alan Priest, 513th Air Control Group Director of Maintenance. Since this is the first time I've written an article for this newsletter, I thought I'd start off with a short introduction. I've been married for 28 years and have a son and two daughters ages 23, 20 & 17. For the last 26 years I've served as an Aircraft/Munitions Maintenance Officer, the first 12 on active duty and the last 14 with the Reserves. I've been stationed at 6 different locations as well as numerous deployments to include Kuwait, Turkey, Iraq and Afghanistan. During that time I've had the opportunity to work with bombers, tankers, fighters, cargo aircraft and now the E-3, but more importantly I've had the honor to work with some of the best and brightest professionals that this country has to offer! First of all, I want to congratulate all the members of the 513th that made the recent 18 day deployment to Eielson AFB, Alaska a great success. In some ways this was like two deployments in one, with 23 members supporting the RED FLAG-Alaska exercise and the other 19 supporting the day to day E-3 maintenance provided by the 962nd host unit. Support of these types of exercises are very important because it provides the aircrews with a realistic multi-service, multi-platform coordinated, combat operations exercise. Not surprisingly, the 513th maintainers excelled at the task and successfully completed 100 percent (9/9) of the planned exercise sorties during the event for more than 48 total flying hours.

As part of the 513th Maintenance leadership it is one of my goals to provide training opportunities such as this one on a regular basis. The E-3 community is not very large, so I believe it's important to cultivate relationships within that community. This deployment not only provided mission-related job training but was also a great

opportunity for us to work alongside our Alaska active duty counterparts and show that deployments like this one can be mutually beneficial. I also believe that as Patriots who are willing to serve their country there is certainly nothing wrong with taking advantage of deployments that also happen to be in a good location. I'm glad to report whether it was visiting Denali National Park, hiking the Tony Knowles Coastal Trail, fishing for salmon and halibut, or taking a seaplane tour, many folks took advantage of the weekend off to explore Alaska. The first group has set the bar high, but I'm confident that on future Alaska deployments we can continue the standard of excellence.

The E-3 community is not very large, so I believe it's important to cultivate relationships within that community.

VOTING

The November 6th general election is just around the corner and I'd like to encourage everyone to let your voice be heard and vote for the candidates of your choice. For those that may have questions about voting, such as voting while deployed etc., the Group Voting Rep is Lt Col Hawkins, Capt Shawn Kilbourne is the Voting Rep for the 970th and Maj Terry Brennan for OSF. Maj Gia Wilson-Mackey and MSgt Pam Rataczyk are the VR's for maintenance. If you know you'll need an absentee ballot you can request one online. Go to FVAP.gov, select "Get Started" and "Register to vote/Request absentee ballot" to complete your Federal Postcard Application and have your forms completed, printed out, and ready to send to your local election office.

Of course no discussion about election season would be complete without mentioning that as government employees and/or members of the Air Force Reserve there are certain restrictions about political activities that we can engage in. Needless to say I don't have the room to talk about all the details of the Hatch Act or DoD Directive 1344.10, so instead I'll focus on a few areas. I've recently read about several federal employees that have lost their jobs due to Hatch Act violations. These violations involved use of Government computers to advocate for certain political candidates. These individuals used their government computers to send e-mails to co-workers (to include individuals that worked for them). These

e-mails promoted certain candidates and in some cases were invitations to fund raisers or promoted donating money to certain candidates. So the bottom line is when it comes to politics do not use government equipment, this doesn't just include computers but printers, scanners, copiers etc etc. I don't want to discourage anyone from supporting political candidates just make sure when you express your views that it's clear they are the views of an individual citizen and not the views of someone representing the Federal Government or the Air Force Reserves. Some of you may also be wondering if you are allowed time off from work to go vote. Each federal agency has discretion to grant excused absence to employees, but only in limited circumstances when the time off does not interfere with agency operations. OPM recommends that agencies only consider giving employees time off to vote in places where the polls are not open at least 3 hours either before or after an employee's regular work hours.

BUDGET

Lastly I'd like to briefly touch upon the Federal Budget situation. Many of you have probably heard about the budget sequestration that could take effect in January, and could result in significant across the board cuts in the Defense Budget. Unfortunately this problem won't be addressed until after the elections, therefore my advice is not to listen to the "doom and gloom" rumors between now and then. Instead concentrate on what we do know, which is that the Congress has passed a continuing resolution (CR) to keep the government funded for the next 6 months. While working under a CR can create problems for certain agencies, for the members of the 513th it will pretty much mean business as usual for the next 6 months. The Air Force has provided us with "Operating under the FY13 CR" guidance, and in the meantime we will continue to spend our funds in the most efficient and effective way as possible as we wait for a budget or the next CR. Have a safe and productive UTA!



Troops Mounting Student Debt Raises Concerns at Pentagon

by Phil Stewart
Reuters News

U.S. military officials voiced concern Thursday over American troops' mounting student-loan debt, saying loan companies appeared to be guiding them away from special protections they earned through service.

About 41 percent of America's armed forces have student loans to repay, according to one recent survey, and Pentagon officials say financial troubles are among the top sources of anxiety among troops - sometimes topping war itself.

Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta told reporters that the most common reason that troops lose security clearances is financial troubles, including overwhelming debt for mortgages, credit cards and student loans.

"And that's something that we absolutely now have to address," Panetta said at a Pentagon news conference detailing a new report on student-loan debt.

"Because of their sacrifice, it should be easier, not tougher, for servicemembers to be able to pay off their college debt," he said.

The growing burden of student loans in the military appears partly to reflect a national trend. Two-thirds of U.S. college seniors who graduated in 2011 had student-loan debt, with an average of \$26,600 per borrower, according to a study released Thursday by the California-based Institute for College Access and Success.

The Pentagon report cited a figure from 2008 that the amount of student debt for active-duty servicemembers graduating from college in 2008 was \$25,566.

But troops, unlike the general population, should benefit from laws meant to help them manage their student debt, including the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, which cuts interest rates to 6 percent during active-duty service on debt incurred prior to service.

Instead, the report warned, troops confused by the complexities of their benefits were being guided into unfavorable debt repayment plans or being refused their legal benefits.

"I'm concerned that the report that is being issued today warns of student loan companies that not only may confuse servicemembers, but even violate the law in the approach that they take," Panetta said.



In The Spotlight



Technical Sergeant Laura Boehm

Unit: 513th Operations Support Flight
Job title: Aircrew Flight Equipment NCOIC
Hometown: Chicago, Illinois
Place I'd like to visit: India
Favorite part of my job: Knowing our aircrew members trust me with their lives. Also, hearing all the TDY stories. ;)
Biggest pet peeve: Bad spelling/poor grammar.
Little known fact about me: I'm a bit of a germaphobe. You won't ever catch me without disinfectant close by.
Favorite memory from your time in the 513th: Hickam TDY 2010.
If I had a superhero ability, it would be: Invisibility.



Staff Sergeant Douglas Wall

Unit: 513th Maintenance Squadron
Job title: Hydraulic Mechanic
Hometown: Kokomo, Indiana
Place I'd like to visit: Japan.
Favorite part of my job: Working with Active Duty because it gives me a difference perspective, and I am always meeting new people.
Little known fact about me: I'm a Notre Dame football fan.
Biggest pet peeve: Not being able to find what I am looking for because things are out of place.
Favorite memory from your time in the 513th: TDY to McChord AFB in Seattle.
If I had a superhero ability, it would be: The ability to run like Flash so I wouldn't have to worry about the PT test any more.

Fall, Football, Food, Veteran's Day...What's Not to Love?

by Lt. Col. Dell Robertson
970 AACS Commander

November is undeniably one of the best months of the year. Okay, it can be a bit chilly but when you think about it... Fall, Football, Food, Veteran's Day, the excitement of upcoming holidays, the pending (albeit temporary) reprieve from political ads on TV... the list of positives surely includes an upside for every taste.

As I write this the East Coast is recovering from the aftermath of Sandy, and while such disaster is not a welcome house guest, it's been uplifting to witness the thankful spirit of those affected. Also as we go to press with this edition of Rabbit Tales, the pending homecoming of our fellow airmen is cause for much celebration. It is certainly a time to be thankful for the return of our friends and co-workers.

For those culturally deficient, here's your daily dose... "Small cheer and great welcome makes a merry feast." ~William Shakespeare



The commitment, the service and the sacrifices of our Citizen Airmen are elements of our particular component that hold special appreciation. Reuniting our units, the safe return of the men and women of the 970th and our maintenance team, welcoming back the AACS Squadron Commander, LTC Matt Conrad--all make the list (professional category) of the things I'm thankful for. Similarly, the members of our unit who were not mobilized exerted much effort these last few months as they endeavored to hold things together despite many local challenges. Tying it all together and perhaps providing the foundation for our ability to succeed (or perhaps endure?) recent challenges... both near and far... lies within the support of our families and significant others. For those not so much into Bill Shakespeare, here's another angle with a more tactile approach... "The Pilgrims made seven times more graves than huts. No Americans have been more impoverished than these who, nevertheless, set aside a day of thanksgiving." ~H.U. Westermayer
So many elements coming together toward common goals; without excessive blather and in its most simple forms---thank you one and all. It's an honor to serve with each of you.

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Where Are They Now?

Captain Alyson Van Ness

How long did you serve with the 513th?
I was in the 513th from Nov 98 to Jul 06. I was Communication Systems Operator (CSO) in the 970th. I also had the additional duties of Supply and PTL.

What is your current position?
My current position is as a Pilot on C-130J's in the 815 AS at Keesler AFB, MS. I have deployed twice so far with this unit, once to Qatar and once to Afghanistan. We primarily fly tactical airlift and airdrop, and I have also done numerous Aeromedical evacuation missions throughout Afghanistan. But the most important mission I was allowed to do over there was to bring back the fallen from austere locations to larger bases so they could be prepped for their journey home to their families.

What was one of the biggest challenges you faced while assigned to the 513 ACG?
One of the biggest challenges I faced while at the 513th was achieving my goals in a timely manner. It was very easy to just fly and work and have fun. Luckily, I had a few of the best mentors and supervisors and they did a great job of keeping the end goal of pilot in sight for me.



What is your favorite memory of the 513th?
My favorite memory of the 513th is our two year activation in 2001 and our subsequent deployments to Incirlik AB, Turkey. I know the activation was tough on some people and their families but that is when I grew the closest to many of the men and women in the 513th, and I will always consider them my family.

Do you have any advice for current members?
The only advice I could give is take advantage of being able to move around into different positions or jobs. The more you learn about the unit, the mission, and the Air Force the more it will help you with handling career progression and promotions. Try not to be stagnant and lose sight of any goals you may have. Your supervisors and your leadership should be more than willing to help in any way they can to help you achieve them. Stagnation should not be an option and you should always be bettering yourself in some way.

Where are you now?
I recently moved back to Oklahoma City to fly for the FAA in the Flight Inspections Office.

I had a great time as a CSO in the 970th. I will be forever grateful to my mentors, family and friends there that helped me grow up and achieve the goals I once told them I had at my initial interview. People often ask why I did not go straight to college and commission and the easiest answer I can give them is that I would have lost out on some of the most memorable years of my life with some of the greatest people I know in some of the most exotic spots in the world. Enlisting was the best choice I ever made and it has shaped me into a better person, a better officer and a better pilot.

Safety Corner: Fatigue Survival Toolbox

by Katrina E. Avers and William B. Johnson

Would you go into the desert without water?
Unless you're part camel, the obvious answer is "no" since we all know how important water is for survival. However, this same acknowledgment of a life-sustaining necessity doesn't always seem to apply to sleep with the same level of urgency. Going to work without adequate sleep is like going into the desert without water: It is dangerous! Yet, it's startling how few of us actually get the required winks needed each night and come to work fatigued time and time again. Recognizing this, the FAA created several new tools for aviation maintenance technicians (AMT) to heighten awareness of this vital issue and to help keep the dangerous consequences of fatigue at bay.

A Few Keys to Survival
Some in the aviation industry continue to see fatigue as a normal and unavoidable part of aviation maintenance. They consider that with enough effort, tired workers can continue to perform their jobs effectively. However, the evidence shows that fatigue has a very real detrimental impact on not only your personal safety, but also flight safety. Fatigue is a known contributor to on-the-job mishaps, personal injury, poor personal health, injury to others, and the quality of your family and social life. To be fully prepared for long work days, night work, and an unpredictable schedule, you need to be aware, plan, and take action. FAA has put together several new tools to help. Key among them is a 2010 pocket calendar for AMTs entitled Fatigue Survival Toolbox. The portable calendar identifies and features 12 critical issues that can influence fatigue and provides you with the tools necessary to combat fatigue both on and off the job.

Be Aware
The first step to surviving fatigue is recognizing that fatigue is not something you can just "work through." You must recognize that fatigue is a hazard that can lead to increased errors and greater safety risks. Most of us cannot accurately assess when we are fatigued. However, there are a number of physical, mental, and emotional symptoms to help determine if fatigue has

become a safety risk. By reviewing the list of symptoms provided in the calendar and listed below, you'll have a good idea if you may be experiencing some level of fatigue or reduced alertness. If you exhibit fatigue-related symptoms regularly, you should consider seeing a doctor.

Planning Is Important
Most of us would not even think of going into the desert without a plan, yet many of us only think of the next thing that has to be done in our daily lives. To have quality of life, we must plan and set aside time for sleep, work, family, and friends. We must prioritize our time and prepare in advance. For example, you probably shouldn't plan to perform a complex maintenance activity on a Friday night after you have worked a full day, run errands, mowed the lawn, and helped put the kids to bed. Although you may think you are okay to do the job, your body's internal clock will be telling your brain to go to sleep. The bottom line: We must be aware of our limitations and plan accordingly.

Take Action
Planning is effective only if it is paired with action. So, don't delay—request a copy of the Fatigue Survival Toolbox calendar now. Ask your local FAASafetyTeam Program Manager (FPM) for details. You can identify your FPM by going to www.FAASafety.gov, then go to the "Directory" where you can search for the appropriate person to contact. In addition to the calendar, there are other tools that can help guide your plan of action against fatigue. An FAA workgroup involving scientists, mechanics, and regulators recently launched a new fatigue section of the Maintenance Human Factors Web site, along with a new fatigue-focused newsletter for AMTs. Both of these are available at www.mxfatigue.com. Even with these fatigue identification and risk mitigation tools available, the most powerful and direct way to confront fatigue is individual responsibility. Now, get some sleep!

Remember:
SAFETY BEGINS WITH YOU!
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