

Southern Flyer

908th Airlift Wing, Air Force Reserve Command, Maxwell AFB, Ala., Vol. 45, Issue 3, March 2008

Back to Iraq

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Month, symposium hail women's contributions

By Capt. Tonia Stephens
908th Human Resource Development Committee member

Each year March is designated as National Women's History Month to ensure the history of American women will be recognized and celebrated in schools, workplaces, and communities throughout the country. Last November, Senior Master

Sgt. Sam Gipson, Master Sgt. Pamela Rhodes, and I attended an event very much in line with the aims of Women's History Month – the Air Force Women's Training Symposium.

Recognition of heritage, success, and vision was the order of business at the three-day symposium in Springfield, Va., highlighting the

achievements, sacrifices, and contributions made by women over 60 years of the Air Force's rich history.

With over 600 people participating, the venue provided an opportunity for sharing viewpoints and exchanging dialogue with various panelists and distinguished visitors. In one instance, in the 70-80s Heritage Panel discussion,

retired Chief Master Sgt. Vickie Mauldin was quick to point out that, "Every decision you make could be a major turning point in your career. ... Success is where opportunity and skills collide."

Though predominately attended by women, there were some men sprinkled throughout the audience. Men like Sergeant Gipson, 908th MXS accessories flight chief, who commented, "This

has truly been an awesome experience. It has really opened my eyes to many of the struggles that WOMEN faced." He further added, "Those struggles really paid off because we now have many women in leadership roles and they are doing a great job."

In addition to looking at the past, the symposium also provided an opportunity specifically for professional development. One panelist, former 908th Mission Support Group Commander retired Col. Christina Lafferty, was asked whether to pursue education or promotion. "Get as much education as you can," the colonel said. "No one can ever

take away or repossess your mind."

Near the close of the symposium, the attendees, feeling empowered and ready to face new challenges, received some sage advice from Ms. Gail Evans, a former CNN executive vice president. Evans noted:

- Mentoring is vital to success.
- Peer mentoring is important in strategizing for each other.
- When it comes to networking on a business level, women are usually behind the power curve.
- Share more information with each other, especially as it relates to business and opportunities – Sharing life experiences helps to build trust.
- When someone commends you for a job well done, the correct response is, "Thank you." Don't ever minimize what you have accomplished.

The Air Force is still young and vibrant, but it certainly has a dynamic and spirited legacy. All of us—women and men, have stories to tell about how we arrived where we are today. Don't be afraid to tell your story.

Visit www.womensmemorial.com or contact the Enlisted Heritage Hall to get more information regarding oral histories. Go ahead, find your voice, and tell your story...celebrate your contributions to our rich, diverse Air Force.



Photo by Jeff Melvin

Col. Michael J. Underkofler Commander, 908th Airlift Wing

Lt. Col. Jerry W. Lobb Chief, Public Affairs

Jeffery Melvin Deputy Chief/Editor

Staff Sgt. Jay Ponder Public Affairs Specialist

Cover photo...

First Lt. Nick Poe, 357th AS, enters a 908th AW C-130 bound for Southwest Asia Feb. 5. See Pages 8 and 9 for more about the wing's voluntary rotation supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Southern Flyer

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Healthy Airmen

You can predict your medical future

By Lt. Col. Carol Anders
Nurse Practitioner, 908th Aeromedical Staging Squadron

You can not change your age, your DNA or your culture, but you can predict your health by knowing what to assess at what age to detect early on those risks that can affect your health as you age.

This is the first of three articles that will break down by age what you should be screening for at what age. The screenings will alert you about the risks factors that you face in the years ahead and hints or tips to improve your health now. Let's begin, with the 18-34 year old age group.

18-34 years

I know you are young, healthy and invincible, but you are still at risk for health problems and lifestyles that can affect you later in life. As someone I once knew said on their 85th birthday, "If I had known I was going to live this long I would have taken better care of myself when I was younger."

Everyone in this age group needs to be aware of four areas to screen:

1. Blood Pressure – should be checked at least every two years. Normal blood pressure is now 120/60. High blood pressure (hypertension) can lead to increased risk of heart disease, kidney disease and stroke. In the black population, hypertension is epidemic and is the leading cause of stroke. The military considers high blood pres-

sure needing medical care as 140/90.

2. Immunizations – For the Airman, these are a must as they affect your IMR (individual medical readiness) status. Most colleges require current immunizations as well.

3. STD tests- Sexually transmitted diseases are on the rise in this country, according to the Center for Disease Control. Chlamydia, gonorrhea and syphilis are the three most common sexually transmitted diseases. If you are having unprotected sex you are at risk for these infections.

4. Body-mass index (BMI) – Height and weight checks on a regular basis help to monitor this. Not sure what your BMI is? Go to the AF portal and log on to the fitness site. Put in your height and weight and it will compute it for you. Normal body mass index is between 18.5 and 25 percent while obesity is 30 percent or greater. For example: If you are six feet and weigh 182 pounds your BMI is approximately 25 percent. If you are six feet and weigh 230 pounds your BMI is approximately 31 percent. Values will vary depending on which chart or method you use to measure BMI. However, most

authorities will agree obesity is BMI greater than 30 percent.

Women need to add three more tests and consider their health when trying to get pregnant.

1. Breast exams - get in the habit now of doing monthly breast exams. You are your breast's best friend when it comes to knowing what your breast tissue feels like. While less than 2 percent of breast cancers are diagnosed in women under the age of 34, monthly self breast exams and similar breast exams by a pro-

vider at least every three years help to establish a base line for later.

2. Pelvic exam and PAP smear – should start no later than age 21 or within three years of becoming sexually active (whichever comes first). The occurrence of cervical cancer rates fell 17 percent from 1998 to 2002. With the advent of the HPV (Human Papillomavirus) vaccine that targets certain sexually transmitted strains of human papillomavirus associated with the development of cervical cancer and genital warts, these rates should drop even more. It takes 10-15

years for HPV to develop into cancer. Therefore it's important to catch abnormalities before they turn potentially malignant.

3. Complete blood count (CBC) – This test is used to determine anemia. It examines the red and white blood cells, hemoglobin and other blood components. Twelve percent of women of child bearing age suffer from anemia. Anemia is easily diagnosed and treated.

4. Pregnancy – most often occurs in this age group. The developing fetus is growing many times before the woman

even realizes she is pregnant. Folic acid is vital to the development of the brain and nervous system in the first 8 weeks of life. So, thinking about getting pregnant, consult your doctor and be sure you are healthy (i.e. not anemic and adequate folic acid intake). If you are sexually active and do not want to get pregnant, you should use some form of birth control.

Men have one self exam that needs to be done starting at the age of 14 to check themselves for signs of cancer (usually lumps or swelling). The test is a testicular self-exam. In recent history, perhaps the most famous person who suffered from testicular cancer was Lance Armstrong. It is treatable and curable as Armstrong's case illustrates. The key is early detection.

What test should be done for those of you over 34? Next month we will explore the tests and monitoring for those over age 34. ((Material for this article came from "A Guide to Predicting Your Medical Future", *Newsweek*: 21 January 2008 by Roxana Popescu and Mary Carmichael)

The image shows a BMI calculator interface. At the top, there are two tabs: "STANDARD" and "METRIC". Below the tabs is a silhouette of a person with a heart in the chest. To the right of the silhouette is a vertical scale with tick marks. Below the silhouette are input fields for "Your Height:" with two boxes for "feet" and "inches", and "Your Weight:" with one box for "pounds". At the bottom is a button labeled "Compute BMI".



Enlisted attendees get life lessons at readiness workshop

The second Wingman Readiness Workshop was held Feb. 9-10 at Maxwell AFB's Airman and Family Readiness Center.

The workshop, sponsored by the 908th's Human Resource Development Council, offered enlisted members from E-1 to E-6 two days of courses about finances, education, CCAF, TSP, promotions, values, goal setting, bullet writing, deployment preparation and some fun as well.

Sixteen presenters spoke during the workshop. The speakers came from Air Force Reserve Command, the Senior Noncommissioned Officer Academy, Air Education and Training Command, Enlisted Heritage Research Agency and four members of the 908th Airlift Wing.

"It was great!" said Tech Sgt Keith Rollins, 908th Maintenance Squadron. He said he particularly liked the information on personal finance and enlisted heritage. Rollins, and several other attendees, said the course should be required for everyone.

Senior Airman Joel Howell



Unit enlisted personnel pay apt attention to guest speakers who addressed a variety of topics such as finances, education, CCAF, TSP, promotions, values, goal setting, bullet writing, and deployment preparation during the Wingman Readiness Workshop held Feb. 9-10.

said he didn't initially look forward to the course but he enjoyed it and got a lot out of attending. Howell's favorite portion was 908th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron's Senior Master Sgt. Leon Alexander's class on writing bullets for performance reports.

Although the workshop had serious content, fun was on the agenda. Tech. Sgt. Vicky Gissendanner said she enjoyed the fitness activity, learning how to play "Wallyball." She enjoyed it particularly because the group made up the rules as they went along.

The next Wingman Readiness Workshop is planned for Saturday and Sunday, May 17, 18, 2008. If you would like to attend, please let your supervisor, first sergeant, and commander know you are interested.



Photos by Chief Master Sgt. Rick Fanning

Master Sgt. Ronnie Patterson, 908th AES, makes a point during a discussion on values moderated by a guest speaker while Senior Airman Quanita Knight, 908th ASTS, listens intently.

UPCOMING EVENTS

March

- 1 — Wing Commander's Call, 3:30 p.m., Polifka Auditorium, Bldg. 1403
- 7 — Maxwell-Gunter Annual Awards Banquet, 6:30 p.m., Officers' Club, Get tickets from your first sergeant
- 13-15 — Women in Aviation Conference. San Diego, Calif.

April

- 5 — Hank Call Sign Dedication. Time/location TBD. 908th AW C-130 call sign changes to "Hank" to honor country music legend and former Montgomery resident Hank Williams Jr. Montgomery native Jett Williams, Hank Williams' daughter and a singer and songwriter in her own right, is the invited guest.
- 5 — Air Force Reserve 60th Anniversary Celebration, 4p.m. Bldg. 1455, Maintenance Half-bay Hangar. Open to all, including families & civilians. Entertainment by Air Force Reserve Command Band and Jett

Williams. Tickets cost: \$6, adult; \$2, child. See your first sergeant to buy your tickets this UTA!

- 6 — Wing-wide Runway Run/Walk (1.5- and 2.9-mile options), 6:45 a.m. behind the 357th AS Building

May

- 2 — Clergy Day (See Jan and Feb "Southern Flyer" for nomination forms or call PA at (334) 953-6804)
- 3 — Enlisted Call, 4 p.m., Maxwell Events Center (formerly Enlisted Club)
- 3 — Officers' Call, 4 p.m., Officers' club
- 4 — Holocaust Memorial Service, time/location TBD



Photo by Jeff Melvin

From left, Debbie Smith, Ella Treece, Mary Henley, Linda Roberts, and Master Sgt. Angie Solomon are all smiles about the good news -- the financial analysis office has been named the best in AFRC. Mary Lacy, another member of the award winning team, is not pictured.

Les Femmes FM (the FM ladies)

Finance office earns command award

The 908th Financial Management Office earned recognition as the best financial analysis office in Air Force Reserve Command.

The command announced its 2007 financial management and comptroller awards Jan. 14 and the finance ladies, as the seven full-time FM employees are affectionately called, took top honors in the financial analysis category.

The seven-woman office handles a \$47 million budget and supports the wing's 1,200 unit reservists along with more than 500 other reservists, primarily individual mobilization augmentees, around the Maxwell-Gunter complex.

908th AW Commander Col. Michael J. Underkofler said the FM ladies "treat every penny as if that penny comes out of their own pocketbook." They take good care of the taxpayers' money, the colonel said.

The finance office oversees budget formulation and execution, payroll, travel expenses, debt collection, government purchase card accounts, government travel card accounts, purchase orders and paying bills for supplies and equipment.

Perhaps one of the keys to the office's outstanding performance is the experience of key staff members.

Linda Roberts, who runs the office, is no stranger to unit members, having spent 27 years in the unit as a reservist before retiring in 2002 as the wing's command chief. She has been a civilian employee in the finance office since 1996.

Debbie Smith, who handles military pay, has been working with the 908th since 1997. Last year she was named the command's top financial services civilian (GS 10 and below).

And then there's Ella Treece who's been

with the wing for 20 years and a member of the finance office for the past 9 years. She's responsible for the accuracy of the nearly 12,000 orders the office processes each year.

RPA analyst Mary Henley handles the wing's reserve personnel appropriation and has worked in the office since 1996. Mary Lacy who has over 20 years of financial experience handles the operations and maintenance budget and has been with the office for five years. Master Sgt. Angie Solomon, a unit member, is serving a long tour for two years supporting the office because of the increased pay and travel requirements due to the unit's activation in support of contingency operations.

The office's reputation around the command is such that they have been asked on numerous occasions to give briefings to other wings on their processes..

Wing selects annual award winners for 2007

Congratulations are in order for the enlisted, officer and civilian personnel recently named the wing's top performers for the preceding year.

Named the wing's best for 2007 are:

Capt. Danielle M. Stringer, 908th OSF; Company Grade Officer of the Year; Senior Master Sgt. Christopher L. Barnby, 908th AMXS, Senior NCO of the Year; Tech. Sgt. David Reza, 908th ASTS, NCO of the Year; Senior Airman Timothy B. Smith, 908th MXS, Airman of the Year; Senior Master Sgt. Don J. Johnson, 908th AMXS, First Sergeant of the Year; and Debbie Smith, 908th AW/FM, Category I Civilian of the Year (Grade GS 1-6) and Mary E. Lacy, 908th AW/FM, Category III Civilian of the Year (Grade GS 9-12)

They will represent the 908th in the Maxwell/Gunter Annual Awards program. Announcement of base-wide winners will be made at the Maxwell/Gunter Awards Banquet held at the Maxwell Officers' Club March 7. The social hour lasts from 6 to 7 p.m.; dinner starts at 7.

The menu choices will be filet mignon, marinated chicken breast, filet of salmon and (upon request) vegetable lasagna. *(Note: meal prices were unavailable at newspaper deadline.)*

Please contact your first sergeant before 11 a.m., March 1 for reservations if you would like to attend the banquet. Pay by check (payable to Maxwell Officers' Club), club card, or cash.



Senior Airman Timothy B. Smith, 908th MXS, Airman of the Year



Mary E. Lacy, 908th AW/FM, Category III Civilian of the Year (Grade GS 9-12)



Debbie Smith, 908th AW/FM, Category I Civilian of the Year (Grade GS 1-6)



Tech. Sgt. David Reza, 908th ASTS, NCO of the Year



Senior Master Sgt. Christopher L. Barnby, 908th AMXS, Senior NCO of the Year



Capt. Danielle M. Stringer, 908th OSF, Company Grade Officer of the Year



Senior Master Sgt. Don J. Johnson, 908th AMXS, First Sergeant of the Year



908th Maintenance Squadron's Senior Airman Timothy Smith completes final mobility processing actions with the help of Master Sgts. Connie Rollins, left, and Alison Gomez.



Visiting dignitaries, from right, Maj. Gen. Martin Mazick, 22nd Air Force commander; Brig. Gen. Richard Severson, AFRC assistant vice commander; Commander Col. Michael Underkofler; Col. Jon Andre, 908th AW vice commander; retired Col. Ed Jennings, 908th Operations Group commander.

908th AW steps forward, becomes first AFRC C-130 unit to accept voluntary tour supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom

By Jeff Melvin
908th AW Public Affairs

About 90 wing members departed for Southwest Asia last month. The first group of about 30 Airmen left Feb. 5 aboard two unit C-130 aircraft. The second group left Feb. 6 aboard a KC-10 aircraft from McGuire AFB, N.J.'s 514th Air Mobility Wing.

The deployment represented another milestone for the 908th AW as the wing became the first C-130 unit in Air Force Reserve Command to deploy under a new rotation system filled by volunteers. Unlike past deployments where the participating reservists were activated the 908th and follow on Reserve C-130 units in the new rotation system will provide airlift support for U.S. Central Command using volunteers serving tours lasting approximately one month.

On hand to see the first group off reservists off were

their families and other base personnel, including most of the remaining 60 unit reservists slated to leave the next day aboard the KC-10.

Also watching the reservists leave Feb. 5 was 22nd Air Force Commander Maj. Gen. Martin M. Mazick, whose job includes overseeing all AFRC C-130 units, and Brig. Gen. Richard Severson, AFRC assistant vice commander.

General Mazick thanked the deploying reservists for "stepping up." He said when the command put the call out for volunteers, the 908th volunteered to go first. "They raised their hands and said, 'Put me in, coach,'" the general said.

General Severson said a similar rotation using volunteers was used near the end of Desert Storm in the 1990s. He noted that he bunked with a 908th member while serving in Desert Storm and was aware of contributions the unit has already made supporting

the Global War on Terror. He added he was amazed that 908th members "keep doing it again and again."

In addition to more aircrew and maintenance people, the group on the KC-10 included Airmen from the 908th Security Forces Squadron. After the security forces reservists arrive in theater, they will board another aircraft bound for a different deployed location than the aircrew and maintenance personnel.

Perhaps 908th SFS Tech. Sgt. James Harrell Jr. spoke for all the deploying members when he said, "We're going to do the mission but most importantly, we're going to take care of each other and watch each others' backs."

The 908th AW was activated in support of Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom from November 2003 to November 2005. During that period, wing aircrews flew more than 10,000 hours, including 7,000 hours in and around Afghanistan and Iraq.



Although it's her first deployment as Dionne Wilson, 908th LRS, relies on deployments during her eight-year as some comforts of home along.



Gen. Edward Crowell, mobilization assistant to the Air Force, salutes the departing reservists along with 908th AW S. Steve Carey, representing Montgomery AFA Chapter



An unit C-130 carrying departing Reservists lifts off from the Maxwell AFB flightline Feb. 5.



Staff Sgt. [Name] is a 908th member. She brings the wisdom gained from several years of active duty career and brings



Photos by Jeff Melvin

Deploying reservists board a KC-10 aircraft from McGuire AFB, N.J. as they head for Southwest Asia Feb. 6, to provide support for Operation Iraqi Freedom.



Staff Sgt. Jeremy Ward, Senior Airman Gregory Bouie and Airman 1st Class Taran Walker practice entry procedures.



A 908th SFS squad performs rifle engagement drills.



From left, Tech. Sgt. Jason Dunn and Senior Airman 1st Class Taran Walker covers the area with



Tech. Sgt. Eric Townsend practices M9 pistol engagement drills in full body armor.

SF Airmen complete Patriot Defender '08

908th SFS members get jump start on deployment preparations

By Tech. Sgt. James Harrell Jr.
908th Security Forces Squadron

Members of the 908th Security Forces Squadron got a jump start on advanced preparations for their six-month deployment overseas by completing Patriot Defender '08, an intense two-week combat training course held at Camp Swift Texas Army National Guard Training Center. The 610th Security Forces Squadron based out of Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base, Fort Worth, Texas, conducts the training.

The 908th joined several other units who are also deploying to the same location including Homestead Air Reserve Base, Fla.'s 482nd SFS, Westover JRB, Mass.'s 439th SFS and Tinker AFB, Okla.'s 507th SFS. The Air Force Reserve security forces personnel will join with

active duty members from Nellis AFB, Nev. and Malmstrom AFB, Mont. to form the 506th Expeditionary SFS.

Personally overseeing the training at Camp Swift was the future squadron commander and defense force commander, Lt. Col. James Hurley. Before the training began, Colonel Hurley spoke to the group and shared his vision of the 506th's

mission. He added that he would personally evaluate every member

for strengths and weaknesses to better place personnel in vital areas. Individual units ceased to exist as the squadrons were integrated into three flights, giving the security forces members chances to get to know each other, explore different ways of solving problems, and carry over the integration they will see in theater.

To give the students a better understanding on what to expect when they hit the ground, the CADRE at Patriot Defender provided area specific training driven by the events and operations most likely to occur at the deployed location. Training covered issues such as improvised explosive devices recognition and evasion, convoy operations, escort procedures, urban operations, and cultural awareness. In one part of training, a CADRE member role played a local national and students were asked to conform to local customs by having the female members sit in the back of the room and not to speak to him. Some found this outrageous, but CADRE members explained being aware of cultural traditions and respecting local customs would be part of the job.

The training was provided in three phases: the first phase consisted of classroom training; the second involved urban operations and the third, a large, three-day field training exercise that would test members' abilities in mounted patrolling, dismounted patrolling, and main-line defense. Mounted patrolling allowed students to plan and conduct convoys, combat patrols, and escort operations. Dismount patrolling provides an in-depth look into how important it is to the battlefield. Dismounted patrolling provides deterrence against enemy operations, reassurance of the local populace, and attrition of enemy forces by means of assaults, check points, and arrest of known leaders and sympathizers. Main-line defense is the basis for all security forces operations. Students employ entry controls points, defensive fighting positions, and sensors to provide an integrated base defense plan. This denies the enemy the opportunity to disrupt base operations such as aircraft landings and take offs.

The training proved invaluable. Members returned ready to better conduct their mission, and armed with firsthand knowledge of their commander's intent as well as familiarity with the people they will be working with.



Photos by Tech. Sgt. James Harrell Jr.



Jonathan Laney perform long halt drills while operating his M240B machine gun.

Wing snapshots

From left, Senior Airman Bryant Culpeper gives direction to a heavy equipment operator while fellow air transport specialists Airmen 1st Class Aaron Knox and Julius Johnson get ready to load cargo onboard the visiting KC-10 aircraft from MCGuire AFB, N.J. that carried about 60 908th AW personnel to Southwest Asia Feb. 6.



908th Operations Group Lt. Col. David Heinlen endures the the customary hose down following his 'fini flight' Feb. 8. Heinlen, a 14-year 908th member, retires from the Air Force Reserve this month; however, his flying days aren't over yet as he stills flies for Delta Airlines.

Photo by Jeff Melvin



Air Force Assistant Secretary Craig Duehring, 908th Maintenance Squadron, during a reception. Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Military Duehring presented Donofrio with a certificate of appreciation for his service as a member of the 908th. 908th AW Commander Col. [Name] presented Duehring with an Alabama plaque in appreciation of his service as a member of the Air Force Reserve.



Photo by Jeff Melvin



Photo by Jeff Melvin

Left, Senior Airman Matthew Bruce, 908th Maintenance Squadron, performs an operational check on electrical heater during January's UTA.



Photo by Lt. Col. Jerry Lobb

...ing poses with Airman Tony Donofrio, ...cent visit to Maxwell. Duehring is the ...anpower and Reserve Affairs. Secret...oin as one of the youngest members ...Michael J. Underkofler presented the ...recognition for his support of the Air



Photo by Melanie Rodgers

Recent Airman Leadership School grad Senior Airman Mattie Taylor, 908th Civil Engineering Squadron, presents a memento on behalf of her classmates to ALS Class 88-02 mentor, Master Sgt. Pamela Gaspard. CES's Senior Airman Terrence Meriweather was in the ALS graduating class, too.

2007 AFRC Military Equal Opportunity Officer of the Year Profile

Name/Rank: Capt. Tara S. Simmons-Gulck

Duty title: Chief, Military Equal Opportunity

Hometown and or current Residence: Montgomery, Ala.

Duties and responsibilities: The MEO staff serves to assist commanders in conducting programs on equal opportunity and human relations education. These programs seek to eliminate unlawful discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin to include sexual harassment.

Work philosophy: I know the price of success: dedication, hard work, and an unrelenting devotion to the things you want to see happen.

Reserve Status: Traditional Reservist

Civilian occupation: Operations Specialist, Department of Homeland Security

Personal philosophy or motto: Leadership is solving problems. The day Airmen stop bringing you their problems is the day you have stopped leading them. They have either lost confidence that you can help or concluded you do not care. Either case is a failure of leadership.

Her thoughts on the honor: "It's an honor and highlight of my military career to be recognized as AFRC's Military Equal Opportunity Chief of the Year. I never imagined winning the award. I'm fortunate to be able to do what I love and hopefully make a difference.

Sends thanks: "I want to thank Col. Michael Underkofler and Col. Jon Andre (908th AW commander and vice commander, respectively) for allowing me serve as the MEO chief. I also want to thank my co-worker, Master Sgt. Gloria Derico for her work and support as well as Master Sgt. Daphne Soto of the 2nd Bomb Wing/ME at Barksdale AFB, La., and Tech. Sgt. Laron Washington of the 42 ABW/ME here at Maxwell."



Photo by Jeff Melvin

Capt. Tara S. Simmons-Gulck, 2007 AFRC MEO Officer of the Year

How much do you know about seasonal flu?

Seasonal flu occurs each winter and is caused by human flu viruses that are often similar to those that circulated among people during previous flu seasons. Seasonal flu affects about 10-15 percent of the population. Deaths caused by seasonal flu generally occur in the elderly and other high-risk groups such as the very young and those with some pre-existing medical conditions. About 36,000 Americans die each year from seasonal flu.

Flu has a short incubation period, meaning most people will feel symptoms within about three days of exposure. A person might spread the virus to others for up to two days before he or she begins to feel sick. Once symptoms (fever, muscle aches, cough, etc) appear, adults may continue to spread the virus to others for about five days.

The best protection against any flu virus is immunization. Seasonal flu vaccines are manufactured before the flu season begins based on the strain of virus that is most likely to infect the general population during the next flu season. Levels of protection depend on how well the vaccine matches with last year's strain.

The most effective method prevention and protection is at the individual level. Actions taken in the household can have a profound impact on the risk to individuals and the community. Close contact with an infected person who is coughing or sneezing, especially indoors where ventilation is poor, can easily spread the virus. Touching contaminated surfaces such as shopping carts, ATM machines, keys, doors in public restrooms, computer keyboards, etc. can spread the virus if your hands then contact your nose, mouth, or eyes. It is wise to carry and use alcohol-based hand sanitizers frequently. Wipe work areas with sanitizing wipes before and after work.

Social distancing is a prudent precaution also. If you feel sick stay at home and stay away from those who are having flu symptoms. Always cover your mouth and nose when coughing, disposing of the tissue in the wastebasket. If you do not have a tissue, use your upper sleeve or the inner part of the elbow, not your hands. Wash hands frequently and avoid touching your face. Avoid smoking.

Persons 65 years of age and older should consult with a healthcare provider to be immunized with pneumococcal (pneumonia) vaccine, as should people with chronic risk factors.

For more information visit <http://pandemicflu.gov> or contact Maj. Donna Roberts, wing infection control officer at 953-5404. (Contributed by the 908th ASTS Nursing Services Office)

Take Note

Promotions

Congratulations to the following people promoted to the grades indicated:

-to Master Sgt. Marshall Sims, MXS
-to Tech. Sgt. David Harge, ASTS
- Spencer Meeke, MXS
- Nicole Tacey, LRS
-to Staff Sgt. Todd Benge, MXS
- Robert Clarke, MXS
- Christopher Ferguson, LRS
- Brian Law, MXS
- Karen Rhodes, MXG
- Tyler Venafro, ASTS
- Charles Watwood, CES
-to Senior Airman Daniel Gregory, CF
- Taran Walker, SFS

Retirements

According to wing personnel officials, the following people have approved retirements in the Military Personnel Data System for the months indicated.

February- Tech Sgt. Teresa Boykin, ASTS; Master Sgt. Joseph Rood, 908th AW; Tech. Sgt. James Dyches Jr., 25th APS; Tech. Sgt. Kerry Brackett, CES; Master Sgt. Kenneth Farrey, AES; Master Sgt. Ernest Geisen, MXS and Lt. Col. David Heinlen, 357th AS

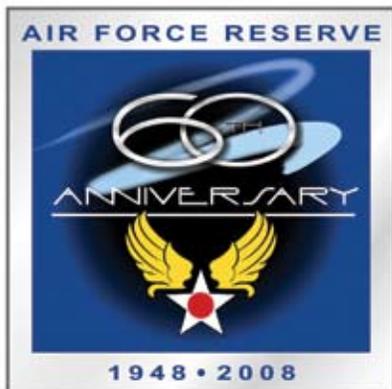
March - Chief Master Sgt. Ricky Spencer, CES; Master Sgt. Deborah Webb, MSG; Master Sgt. Archie Green, MXG; Staff Sgt. Kevin Tarver, 25th APS; Maj. Thaddeus Piotrowski II, AES; Master Sgt. Nancy Butler, CES



Photo by Jeff Melvin

Civil engineers test survey skills

Above, Senior Airman David Allen, and Staff Sgt. Jennifer Wilson, 908th Civil Engineer Squadron, practice using a total geodetic station; once data is stored on the precision surveying instrument it can be downloaded to a computer.



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