

SOUTHERN FLYER



AMC IG DECLARES 908TH AIRLIFT WING

READY TO ROCK

SOUTHERN FLYER



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Wing is pride, professionalism

“As we look out upon 2010, the 908th Airlift Wing faces two significant new challenges: First, more than 20 percent of our personnel will deploy on AEF rotations with some tours extending beyond 180 days. Second, we will bid farewell to some of our key leaders, supervisors and star performers as they retire or move on to new assignments. These challenges will test the mettle of our leadership and the resolve and commitment of our Airmen and families.

But with this new set of mission requirements, and the demands this year will place upon us, I can't help but have a new perspective on our ability to meet the challenges we face in the future. This new perspective is borne of a renewed and unwavering confidence I have in the 908th Airlift Wing to meet any challenge and succeed at any cost.

If you are questioning why I have this revitalized confidence, you must either be new to the organization or an Airman who was deployed or TDY for the majority of 2009. Throughout the entire calendar year, Operational Readiness Inspection

preparation and training was at the center of our focus, dominated our priorities, strained our budgets and consumed a majority of our time and effort. Yes, I can say without a doubt that the ORI, and preparations for it, dominated the scene.

And as we tackled the ORI process, a few expert observers and leaders within AFRC stated that, “the 908 has too much to learn, is far too inexperienced, and has not solved the unique problems it faces at Maxwell to be successful in an AMC ORI.”

Folks, let me say openly, I agreed with many of their points. We were inexperienced (your wing commander being one of them), we had much to learn and we certainly had some specific challenges that required an unprecedented team effort to solve.

But I never believed for one minute we would not succeed. In my mind, it was not possible. I had seen your long hours of dedicated effort. I observed firsthand the vast improvements and the daily personal growth in functional capability and job knowledge. Most importantly, I saw



COL. BRETT J. CLARK
Commander, 908th Airlift Wing

PROFESSIONALISM, PAGE 3

PROFESSIONALISM, FROM PAGE 3

this wing drawn together from top to bottom in a unified effort that was fueled by an endless supply of high-octane unit pride.

As most of you know, the 908th was graded Satisfactory for the 2009 ORI with 19 separate laudatory recognitions. Many of you question the grade and the achievement given that our goal was to receive an Outstanding. However, this fails to recognize our difficult journey in this whole inspection preparation process.

From the 22nd AF ORTP programs and the countless meetings, to the vast array of individual training requirements and the limited- and full-scale exercises, this was a challenge we tackled with steady determination and undaunted professionalism I won't soon forget.

Two other things I won't forget. First, is that if the 908th is down, it won't stay there for long. And secondly, the 908th is an organization headed for more greatness. I know this because strong organizations can overcome adversity, but only great organizations can overcome great adversity.

Many recognized operational readiness experts have pointed to the 908th as having overcome great challenges to achieve these ORI successes. It is certainly a subjective matter and opinions vary. But let me share my take once again. The 908th Airlift Wing is an unparalleled organization of talented professionals with enormous potential on a clear path to greatness.

There's no doubt that we will remain ready ... always.

Wing IG is here to help you

By Maj. Patrick Albrecht
908 AW Inspector General

Inspector General – it's not just inspections!

Now that the ORI has concluded and you have had your fill of inspectors looking over your shoulder, I would like to remind everyone that the Wing IG office is here to help ... not inspect!

The 908 AW/IG office is set up to help you with complaints resolution and offer a place to report Fraud, Waste and Abuse (FWA). Your chain of command is your primary resolution channel, but the IG office does provide an alternate means of appeal if none other exists.

This past year, the Wing IG assisted over 20 Airmen in resolving issues. In fact, over 95 percent of the cases reported resulted in an assist, instead of dismissal or investigation. A majority of the complaints dealt with pay issues and the IG was able to work together with Financial Management to get them resolved.

Looking ahead to 2010, one of our focus areas will be the FWA program. The success of the program lies with all Air Force personnel. Support by both Airmen and civilians is crucial in preventing and

eliminating FWA. We are all responsible for reporting FWA, but there are some out there who are in a perfect position to notice it – our newcomers! Newcomers observe things that seem ordinary to those that have been around.

If you notice FWA, do not be afraid to speak up. Commanders, supervisors and coworkers, listen to your newcomers if they have ideas and/or observations. If you try to report FWA and can't get anyone to take you seriously, report it to the IG.

It is important for commanders and supervisors to make it known that their Airmen can report FWA without fear of reprisal. The immediate supervisory channel is often most familiar with the situation and can resolve the complaint more efficiently and effectively.

Contact the wing IG office on the second floor of Bldg. 1056 via phone/e-mail if you have any questions or concerns about reporting FWA, filing a complaint or to set up an appointment.



ALBRECHT

Thunderbirds team seeking wingmen

The USAF Thunderbirds are accepting applications for demonstration pilots, executive officer, maintenance officer and public affairs officer. Applicants should contact mission personnel flight for submission requirements and deadlines.

For information, go to <http://wwd.my.af.mil/afknprod/ASPs/CoP/OpenCoP.asp?Filter=RC-dP-00-11>.

Contact Senior Master Sgt. Brian Pack at DSN 497-2491 if there are any questions.



SOUTHERN FLYER

COVER PHOTO:

908th Airlift Wing Vice Commander Col. Robert Shepherd greets Wing Commander Col. Brett Clark upon the wing's return from a successful completion of the Operational Readiness Exercise in Gulfport, Miss.

U.S. Air Force Photo/
Gene H. Hughes

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The submission deadline for articles or information is the Monday two weeks prior to the UTA. Send inquiries and submissions to 908AW/PA, 401 W. Maxwell Blvd., Maxwell AFB, AL 36112 or e-mail them to 908aw.pa@maxwell.af.mil. Our phone number is (334) 953-6804 or DSN 493-6804; our fax number is (334) 953-2202 or DSN 493-2202. For information about this schedule, call this office at (334) 953-7874.

BOND *of* BROTHERS

908th family faces new year following near miss at Fort Hood

By Gene H. Hughes
908th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

For Master Sgt. David Royer of the 908th Airlift Wing's 25th Aerial Port Squadron, Nov. 5, began much like any other day. The Thanksgiving holiday was approaching, and he considered himself a very lucky man. After all, he had a good civilian job at Auburn University, a wife, two children and a close family.

When the phone rang at 3 p.m., what began as a seemingly ordinary day would become marked by a historic tragedy that would bring the Royer family a lot closer than they could possibly imagine.

He was sitting in his university office, going over some projects he was working on with co-workers, when a call from his mother came in.

"Have you heard from your brother?"

"I have no idea what you're talking about."

"Well, don't you watch the news?"

"I haven't watched it in the last little while."

"There's been a shooting out at Fort Hood."

Immediately, Sergeant Royer whipped around to his computer and brought up the news. There was a heightened sense of urgency that wasn't there before. His elder brother, Maj. Randy Royer of the Alabama Army National Guard's 135th Expeditionary Sustainment Command, was at the Texas Army post preparing to deploy to Afghanistan.

It was there that events surrounding the tragic shooting which shocked the entire nation began to unfold. Watching the news, Sergeant Royer learned that there were 40,000 troops at the post and only a handful had been injured. It seemed unlikely that his brother was in the Soldiers Readiness Center, the location of the shooting, when it occurred.

"I told my mother, 'Don't worry about it. That's an awful lot of people. I'm sure it's all right,'" he said. "A couple of minutes later, I got an e-mail from his wife saying that she'd received a text from him and that he was OK, so I didn't worry anymore about it. I turned back around, and we finished our meeting."

About an hour and a half later, his

sister-in-law called him back and said, "He's not OK. He's been shot."

"I guess by him saying he was OK, he was trying to relay 'I'm still alive,' or 'Don't worry about me,'" Sergeant Royer said. "But she told me she had to get to Texas that night, so my son and I picked her up and we drove all night Thursday night – 900 miles in 14 hours."

Sergeant Royer knew he and his son could drive her there faster because she would never catch an airline flight so late in the evening, and he wasn't going to leave her alone. He'd made a commitment to her only two weeks before, when his brother had departed, that if she needed anything, he'd drop everything he was doing and help her.

"I didn't know what to expect while I was driving," he said. "I heard he had a tourniquet on his leg and a tourniquet on his arm, and from what I'd always heard, if they're not done correctly or are on too long, you might lose a limb. So I was fully expecting to get out there and find him missing an arm or a leg. That was my biggest fear."

Throughout the long drive, the wounded brother would call, asking where they were, and then fall back to sleep as a result of the pain medication. The Royers arrived at Fort Hood about 9:30 the next morning; a mere 15 minutes after Major Royer went into surgery.

So they waited, and as the time

ticked by, thoughts of how close he had come to losing his brother churned in Sergeant Royer's head.

The major came out of recovery and was placed in intensive care.

After the shooting started, the major had been shot in the back part of the left arm, and the bullet had broken the small bone before exiting through the forearm below the elbow. As he tried to get behind cover, the shooter fired at him again, hitting him in the back of the left thigh. Rendered unable to move, he might have been shot yet again, but a woman reached out and pulled him out of harm's way, and applied a tourniquet to his arm.

After it was over and the wounded were removed from the building, Major Royer found himself lying next to a woman whose wounds were life-threatening.

"He was holding her hand, trying to get here to hold on," Sergeant Royer said. "She didn't make it, and he was pretty torn up about that. All he could remember was her name was Juanita. We found out later she was the highest-ranking person who was shot."

The woman turned out to be Lt. Col. Juanita Warman, a 55-year-old nurse practitioner with the Maryland National Guard. She was one of the 13 fatalities of that tragic day, and one of two victims to receive burial honors at Arlington National Cemetery.

"When I first walked in the room,

he was all wired up." Sergeant Royer said. "He'd open his eyes a little bit and ask, 'Where am I? Why am I here?' I'd tell him and he'd go back to sleep. Ten minutes later he'd wake up and ask me the same thing."

According to the surgeon who operated on the major, he was lucky that the second bullet lodged in his leg. If there had been an exit wound, the blood loss might have been fatal.

After working all day Thursday, driving all of Thursday night and staying up all day Friday, Sergeant Royer was completely exhausted, so he left his sister-in-law with her husband and went to his room to get some sleep. That's when former President George W. Bush and his wife Laura visited the hospital.

"They came in, and he talked to my sister-in-law and gave my brother a presidential coin," Sergeant Royer said. "She tried to call me on my cell phone, but I was so wiped out I didn't even wake up. I hated missing that, but in a way, he kinda missed it too because he was so doped up he didn't remember a lot of it."

Major Royer and his family received quite a few VIP visitations while he was hospitalized, including ABC reporter Bob Woodruff, Texas Governor Rick Perry, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Mike Mullen and Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates. On such occasions, a staff member would come in the room first and ask if the

patient felt up to a visit.

For Major Royer's most distinguished visitor, things happened a little differently.

"My brother said the door opened a little bit, President Obama stuck his head in and asked, 'Randy, can you take a visitor?'"

"I was surprised at his height," Sergeant Royer said. "And no matter your political affiliation, he and the First Lady are extremely nice people."

The major was eventually released, and returned home, where the press was waiting. But despite the attention and probing questions concerning details or possible religious motivations, the unassuming man and his family have been rather quiet about the events of that day.

"I think of the 908 as a great big family, and the family should know what happened," Sergeant Royer said. "But we don't get into specifics about what happened because my brother wants this guy to have his day in court."

We've got our personal feelings, but until he has his day in court, that's where they need to stay."

The major is expected to make a full recovery, and the Royer family will face the dawning of a new year together with a renewed and stronger bond of love and affection.

"I think of my brother as being 10-foot tall and bullet-proof," Sergeant Royer said. "He's my hero."



Maj. Royer, left, and brother Sergeant David Royer enjoy a walk outdoors during Major Royer's recuperation following the Nov. 5 shooting at Fort Hood.

Courtesy photos/Master Sgt. David Royer



Maj. Randy Royer of the Alabama Army National Guard takes the oath of enlistment from his brother, Master Sergeant David Royer of the 908th Airlift Wing.

908 MAKES THE GRADE

By Gene H. Hughes
908th AW Public Affairs

The 908th Airlift Wing justified the months of rigorous training and long hours of hard work by earn-



ALMIND

ing a "satisfactory" rating for its recent Operational Readiness Inspection. The Inspector General team from Air Mobility Command declared the Maxwell wing fully operational and ready to deploy in support of real-world American military missions.

The wing secured its rating in the graded categories of positioning the force, employing the force, mission

support and ability to survive and operate during the Dec. 4-11 inspection held at the Combat Readiness Training Center in Gulfport, Miss.

"These guys are ready to go to war," said Col. John "Woody" Almind, AMC IG team leader. They're ready to deploy to any conventional theater that might be susceptible to chemical attacks or conventional missiles, and protect our freedoms."

During the past several months, the wing has prepared extensively for the ORI with its September Operational Readiness Exercise and subsequent Unit Training Assemblies. The hard work and extra effort sharpened the Airmen's skills and paid off during the inspection, which also included Reservists from the 94th

Airlift Wing, Dobbins ARB, Ga.; the 911th Airlift Wing, Pittsburgh ARS, Pa.; and the 920th Rescue Wing, Patrick AFB, Fla.

"It's truly an honor and a privilege to command this tremendous organization," said Col. Brett Clark, 908th Airlift Wing commander. "This has become even more evident given the time limitations our Reservists had to overcome with only two drill weekends to resolve issues identified during the ORE.

"These inspection results validate what we already knew – the 908th remains ready ... always."

Inspectors evaluated the Maxwell wing's response to scenarios such as missile attacks, chemical agent contamination, security breaches and

mass casualties, all while maintaining a high operations tempo.

The first night of the "war," the inspection team hit the 908 with mortar attacks, situations which forced personnel in critical areas to "bug out" and relocate while still maintaining functional capability. The second night, the wing was challenged even more by chemical missile attacks.

Personnel not only had to fight the war in MOPP 4, but also find where the 'chems' had hit, where the plume was heading and determine what facilities, equipment and personnel had been contaminated.

"That's our most rigorous scenario, and they did a fine job with that," Colonel Almind said. "They came in well prepared. This wing

only did one Operational Readiness Exercise getting ready for this. A lot of units will do two or three, so you can imagine the challenges if you've only had one.

"It really motivates me when folks do as well as they did. These guys had great motivation, great attitude and were very professional. They took it seriously and didn't treat it like an exercise. They fought through to the end."

The inspection team gave out 19 awards for superior performance, double the honors normally bestowed, Colonel Almind said. Four teams and 15 wingmen were recognized for their exceptional efforts during the inspection.

In his report to Colonel Clark and members of his staff, Colonel

Almind congratulated the 908 for a job well done.

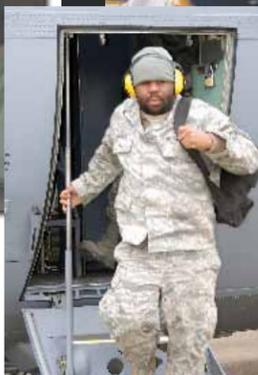
"Your hard work definitely paid off," he said. "We came to validate compliance, programs, processes and, ultimately, your readiness. You came through with flying colors. I know you agree it wasn't easy. We gave you a tough, hard look, and it was obvious that you prepared hard, and you delivered. I saw great leadership throughout, from the wing commander, to the lowest-ranking Airman.

"You definitely live by your motto. The 908th Airlift Wing is 'Ready ... Always!'"



ON THE

MOVE



Hiring an ART

IMPROVEMENT

By Tech. Sgt. Christian Michael
22nd Air Force Public Affairs

This is part 3 of 3 in a series on the Air Reserve Technician program and hiring process.

The Air Reserve Technician hiring process has come a long way since its inception only a decade after the birth of the U.S. Air Force and Air Force Reserve. Recently, there have been advances in the process both at the ground-level and in leadership.

Recent Improvements

In part two of this series, Special Examining Unit manager Pat Nichols said that turnover at Air Force Reserve Command and Air Force Personnel Center had traditionally slowed the efficiency of the program. Recently, that inefficiency has been suppressed by the advent of the ART recruiter and the creation of something new at AFPC. "AFPC has been able to establish an 'ART Cell' to help streamline the process from selection to hire," said Master Sgt. William Hose, ART recruiter for Westover ARB, Mass. "Our recruiters have gained valuable relationships with (AFPC members), along with those at the (SEU). I believe that these relationships have helped us to understand the process better, and allow us to better serve our applicants."

According to Sergeant Hose, program strengths have grown and exist for several reasons.

"First, we (were) able to streamline portions of the (hiring) process for the wing hiring officials, allowing them to concentrate on running the day-to-day operations of their units," said Sergeant Hose. "Applicants now have someone that understands the process, and helps them to achieve a good rating based on their experience."

ART recruiters have been instrumental in the newest evolution of the process.

"(We) have played a vital role in helping to identify and eliminate bottlenecks," said Sergeant Hose. "For example, there have been times when a hiring official selected a member to be an ART only to find out that they are ineligible to join the Air Force Reserve. Just by ensuring our applicants are militarily pre-qualified has saved countless man-hours and eliminated delays in the hiring process."

What Can Improve

While the hiring process has come a long way, there are improvements yet to be seen by those working it.

According to Ms. Gorman, receipt of packages is a bit dated as "applicants can (only) mail or fax" the appropriate forms, saying electronic submission would greatly improve the speed and efficiency of ratings. The SEU is

currently working on a new electronic submission process, though is still in a testing phase.

"A few things can help improve the program," said Sergeant Hose. "Increasing wing and community awareness would go a long way. Also a larger staff at the Special Examining Unit would probably help. The people at the SEU are great at what they do, but they are forced to process a large number of applications in a short period of time."

The ART Program

The ART program has been the backbone of the Reserve since established in 1958. The program put career reservists in direct support of Reserve units by planning training for TRs, maintaining aircraft throughout the month and becoming continuity and experience.

ARTs keep the Reserve battle ready and prepare Citizen Airmen across the country to stand the line with their active-duty counterparts on any land in any conflict worldwide. Those seeking to join the ranks of the ART workforce today will benefit from recent improvements to the process. Once in place, these Citizen Airmen will help ensure the continuation of Air Force and U.S. operations for years to come.

Visit <http://www.afrc.af.mil/library/jobs> for more information.

A MOMENT WITH THE CHAPLAIN

CH. (MAJ.) JAMIE DANFORD

I pray that as a wing we are breathing a big sigh of relief. Our hard work has paid off and we have had a successful ORI.

As often happens in life – we continue with our busy tasks. A good portion of our wing is getting prepared for AEF tasking – continuing our mission.

But even so, we look to January as a chance to begin anew. Alfred Lord Tennyson echoed this thought when he penned these words:

*Ring out the old, ring in the new,
Ring, happy bells, across the snow:
The year is going, let him go;
Ring out the false, ring in the true.*

We have a long-standing tradi-

tion of saying New Year's Resolutions as a way of saying "out with the old and in with the new."

Beginnings are very important. How we end a task is often dependent upon how we begin.

Do we just rush in without warning? Do we gather all information and then proceed? Do we stop and ask for guidance?

As we begin a New Year let us not forget to do the most important thing – to ask for God's blessings. Let us ask Him to guide our steps and give us His presence as we live and make our daily decisions.

Let us remember to start well. Do not just celebrate and make resolutions. Pray for God's blessing and direction this year.

BRIEFS

Senior NCO Leadership and Development Course

The 908th Airlift Wing will be hosting a Senior NCO Leadership and Development Course, Jan. 30-31. The course provides senior NCOs the opportunity to explore in-depth communications, trust, teamwork and current AFRC leadership issues and initiatives.

If you are interested in attending, provide the Wing Education and Training office with a completed AF Form 101.

For information, call Master Sgt. Belinda Ray at 953-6771.

New AF Services Web site designed to engage families

The Air Force Services Agency has launched a new Web site to help Airmen stay connected, informed and engaged in programs as part of the Year of the Air Force Family.

Eligible Airmen, families, and friends can log on to www.myairforcelife.com to participate in competitions and win instant prizes.

PROMOTION ORDERS

ENLISTED

Master Sergeant

Rodney A. Manney Jr.
James E. Williamson
Alexey Fefelov

Technical Sergeant

Stephanie M. Woods
Brian S. Pierpoint
Leyvonne Griffin Jr.
John M McKinnon
Randy Stephens

Staff Sergeant

Quanita R. Knight

Senior Airman

Melissa M. Hamilton
Aaron M. Coggin
Erica D. Deramus
Marvin K. Perdue Jr.
Melissa Lynn Carmon

Airman 1st Class

Larique B. Edwards
Alex J. Rodgers
Erik L. Brown

Airman

Phillip M. Foreman
Amanda N. Harris
Breyanna S. Bass
Jessica M. Cardwell
Michael Ray I. Holmes

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We look forward to hearing from you!