

IMAGES OF AN EXERCISE: SEE PAGES 6-9

SOUTHERN FLYER



NIGHTS *in* MISSISSIPPI

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ORE CLOSING WITH VALUABLE LESSONS LEARNED

HOW MARK FIXED HIS FIGHT

IN SEARCH OF LIFE: LOOKING FOR BONE MARROW

AIR FORCE RESERVE

908TH AIRLIFT WING, MAXWELL, ALA.

OCTOBER 2009

SOUTHERN FLYER



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Make faith bedrock of life

Have you ever really sat down and thought about faith? Chances are that if everything in your life is going pretty much on an even keel — faith is on the back burner of your mind. Even religious people, I have found, do not give much thought to faith during good times. For some reason we normally place faith in the realm of bad times.

If someone has been given bad news — just have faith

I would like for us to rediscover faith. Faith is not some blind hope or meaningless façade. Faith is a rock, or better yet a mountain in our lives. Faith allows us to function each and every day with assurance — a particular assurance.

In fact each of us use faith every day.

When you get up and get in your car — you don't make alternate plans to get to your destination. You have faith that your car will start and the roads will be available to get you to work, school, church, ect.

You had faith

that gravity would work so you just stepped outside your home.

Now you may say, "Well, Chaplain, those are facts." What, you are really saying is these things have worked in the past and I trust (have faith) they will work in the future. We make plans based on what we have seen.

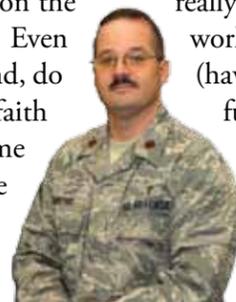
I have faith that the 908th is going to do extremely well in the upcoming ORI. You know why? Because I have seen us do great things in the past.

I have heard the stories, read the reports and been with many as we have deployed, faced inspections, and overcome great obstacles in the past.

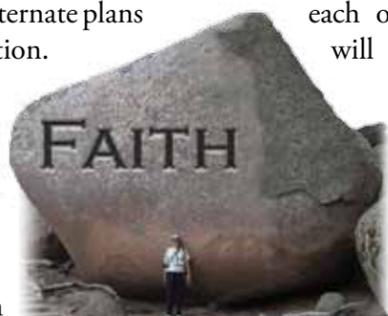
The 908th Airlift Wing is a great family. As with all families we may disagree with each other and go through tough times.

However, I have faith in each of you, faith that we will continue to do the jobs we have well. Faith we will support and walk with each other — faith that we will succeed.

May God be with and bless us all.



CH. (MAJ.) JAMIE DANFORD
Chaplain, 908th AW



ORE closes with valuable lessons learned

By Tech. Sgt. Christian Michael
908th AW Public Affairs

The 908th Airlift Wing came home Saturday after a week-long operational readiness exercise at the Gulfport Combat Readiness Training Center, Gulfport, Miss. While there, the wing learned much in its preparation for the upcoming operational readiness inspection.

"We showed a lot of improvement over the (Operational Readiness Training Program) 4," said Lt. Col. Steve Catchings, 908th Airlift Wing operational readiness warlord, referring to the previous installment of the 22nd Air Force exercise preparation programs leading up to the ORI. "Some areas and functionals did well, others now know the road they need to take to get better."

The wing departed for the CRTCC early in the morning Sept. 14 and quickly set up shop. As night shift, they were the first force on ground after the advance forces had landed, and began operations immediately, pulling a long 18-hour shift their first day. While the week was demanding for everyone in the unit, it was necessary to prepare for what will come in December.

"There's no replacement for this kind of experience," said Colonel Catchings. "There were a lot of firsts. This is the first time we've done a full, no-kidding deployment out to Gulfport. It's invaluable training



U.S. Air Force photo/Tech. Sgt. Christian Michael

Tech. Sgt. Richard Craker, 908th Security Forces Squadron, left, checks the identification cards of Staff Sgt. David Oliver and Senior Airman Marc Joyner, 908th Civil Engineer Squadron, at a checkpoint Sept. 15 during the Operational Readiness Exercise at the Gulfport Combat Readiness Training Center, Miss. Below, Senior Airman Gabriel Bush, a crew chief with the 908th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, services the liquid oxygen store on a C-130 Sept. 12 in preparation for the ORE.

that the Maxwell exercise area, Blue Thunder, just can't provide."

Colonel Catchings said the biggest lesson the unit took away from the ORE was how to integrate in an expeditionary environment with other wings; such as shift sharing, shift changing and other intra-unit coordination. For Airman 1st Class Robbie Jackson, a medical services technician with the 908th Aeromedical Staging Squadron, the ORE was new and invigorating.

"It's definitely a learning experience," said Airman Jackson. "Personally, I learned exactly what my job would be if I do deploy in a worst case scenario. After this experience, I kind of want to

volunteer for a deployment."

Airman Jackson agreed with Colonel Catchings how valuable a lesson it was to see the 908th, 911th and 94th airlift wings, and the 920th Rescue Wing, to come together.

"As chaotic as it was, and all the personalities and four different units, we all came together as the 101st Contingency Aeromedical Staging Facility," said Airman Jackson. "It was going to be a highly stressed environment. It wasn't supposed to be perfect — not going to have a lot of time to set up or get things perfectly, but it's about how we approached it."

908th Airlift Wing Commander Colonel Brett Clark wrapped it up.

"I am proud of the 908th progress in preparation for our December ORI," said Colonel Clark. "Our wing is right where we should be in our readiness improvement efforts. If we all stay focused and on target, I can assure you that we will achieve outstanding results."

SOUTHERN FLYER

COVER PHOTO:

Members of the 908th Airlift Wing rest during the Operational Readiness Inspection Sept. 15 at the Gulfport Combat Readiness Training Center, Miss.

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We solicit articles, drawings and photographs and reserve the right to edit materials to conform to "Southern Flyer" editorial policies. Because of the printing and mail-out schedule the newspaper goes to press on Friday, two weeks prior to the unit training assembly.

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.



U.S. Air Force Photo/
Tech. Sgt. Christian Michael

How Mark fixed his fight

By Tech. Sgt. Christian Michael
908th AW Public Affairs

Deploying is an intense experience, full of 12-hour days and little time to oneself. Despite the demanding days serving the mission, one 908th Airman still managed to find enough time to write a book while deployed overseas.

Senior Master Sgt. Mark Lanton, 908th Aeromedical Staging Squadron, was deployed to Iraq when he felt called to write relating experiences in his life and faith to boxing, a sport he loves.

"I was up reading the Bible," said Sergeant Lanton. "As I read, I came across Revelations 20:10 about how Satan is defeated in the end times. I related the verse to boxing that as Christians, our fight is already fixed."

When a fight is fixed, the outcome is known before the match even begins. Sergeant Lanton relates how, for Christians, the Bible claims victory in their struggles.

"So as Christians, basically it's the same thing," said Sergeant Lanton, medical services superintendent. "You know, no matter what you're going through in this lifetime, no matter what struggles you face, we know that we have the victory as Christians in the end."

Sergeant Lanton's faith impacts how he approaches life, both at the 908th and at home.

"My faith is what gets me through every challenging situation in my life," he said. "It's easy to have faith when times are going good, but God will test your faith to see if you really believe. God requires your faith in Him."

As a former professional boxer and former boxing champion, he related through his book both his passion for God and for boxing into analogies he believes can help people through their struggles.

"I just wrote a commentary on a boxing match between two men, and the various situations the fighters

get into," he said. "I just relate it to some kind of a life situation."

Having boxed since he was ten, Sergeant Lanton said he can relate anything to boxing. "Basically, in a lot of ways, boxing is all I know. So I just relate a lot of life issues to what's happening in a boxing match."

Despite its recent publication date, the book has already touched the lives of readers. Angie Godwin, branch manager at the Officer Training School shopette on Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala, initially bought the book to help teach her growing teenager how to deal with life's struggles.

"I've been trying to work with my son about dealing with challenges and obstacles and coming out a better person on the other side," said Ms. Godwin. She wanted him to understand that "not all battles are supposed to be won,

you're just supposed to come through them, come out stronger and braver."

While she bought the book for her son, the passing of a loved one, in turn, provided unexpected support for a challenge she, herself, had to endure.

"My father was buried a week ago yesterday," said Ms. Godwin, whose father had just been diagnosed with stomach cancer and given three weeks to live. "My son and I had just finished the book (for his benefit) and I realized that this book was meant for me to read."

Ms. Godwin said the spiritually-based book meant a lot to her and that "both teenagers and adults alike can glean a lot from it. It was just a very inspirational book."

Sergeant Lanton finished "The Fight is Already Fixed" while deployed to Iraq and says he couldn't have done it without God's help.

"It just so happened that my replacement was late," he said. "It gave me enough time ... so I believe God had me write this book over there. I guess it's because He knew I would focus."



Ja'Colby Keon Vaughans needs your help.

Born as a normal baby boy Dec. 18 to Staff Sgt. Quiana Carter at Baptist East Hospital in Montgomery, his health deteriorated after only 4 months.

"He spiked a fever," said Sergeant Carter, 908th Airlift Wing Mission Personnel Flight. "The fever wouldn't break, so I took him to the emergency room."

After being seen at Baptist South in Montgomery, Ja'Colby was airlifted to University of Birmingham Children's Hospital in Birmingham. There he was diagnosed with Acute Myeloid Leukemia. He began chemotherapy in June and is scheduled for his first bone marrow transplant Oct. 12. After the transplant, Ja'Colby will be hospitalized for up to six months.

"There are so many risks involved with the transplant," said Sergeant Carter. "But at the same time, there is the possibility of a cure for him. So, I'm letting God have control."

Sergeant Carter seeks for volunteers willing to donate bone marrow in search of a match for her son. The closest potential donor they've found so far is only a 66% match for Ja'Colby.

"I want more people to enroll themselves in the national bone marrow register, just in case they push his transplant back for the possibility they find a match," said Sergeant Carter. "I keep praying they will find one."

Master Sgt. Cynthia Barker, chief, personnel employment, has organized the drive from 1-4 p.m. Sunday of the October UTA in three separate locations: the wing headquarters building, the maintenance squadron and at the clinic.

"(Sergeant Carter) has been with us since basic training," said Sergeant Barker. "When this came up with her son, it just (brought) everyone together. We'll do whatever we can to support her."

According to Sergeant Barker, restrictions on giving blood do not apply to giving bone marrow, so anyone can give. Volunteers who want to be tested for marrow compatibility will endure a gentle swabbing of the interior of the mouth and will have to fill out a form. Being found a match does not obligate the volunteer to give.

Volunteers can contact Sergeants Carter or Barker, Ms. Jasmine Hails or Senior Master Sgt. Martha Roy to find out other ways to help, or by visiting their Web site at www.caringbridge.org/visit/jacolbykeonvaughans.

The Department of Defense also supports members and their families who face illnesses needing bone marrow transplants through the CW Bill DoD Bone Marrow Program. To learn more about the program, visit www.dodmarrow.org.

In SEARCH of LIFE

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Visit one of the three stations and get tested for marrow compatibility with Ja'Colby.

- > 908th Airlift Wing Headquarters building
- > 908th Maintenance Squadron building
- > Maxwell Clinic

Or call Master Sgt. Cynthia Barker at (334) 953-5525, or Senior Master Sgt. Martha Roy at 5541.



NIGHTS *in* MISSISSIPPI

In the cool evening of Sept. 15, the 908th Air-lift Wing was hard at war at the Gulfport Combat Readiness Training Center, Miss. More than 300 Citizen Airmen flew to the CRTC ready to prepare for war and the upcoming December operational readiness inspection.

Pictures from left, members of the Emergency Operations Center handle a wounded member of their office. Center, as the heart of the exercise, the EOC beats with the drum of activity with people on phones, visitors constantly coming and going and the commander staying abreast of it all. Third picture, Master Sgt. Keith Tareco, 908th Maintenance Squadron, refills his canteen. Top right, Master Sgt. David McCaughtry, 908th Security Forces Squadron Combat Arms Instructor, puts a blank firing adapter on the barrel of an M-4. Bottom right, Maj. Dawn Chard marks the log sheet with the time and date she covered a pallet outside with clear plastic.

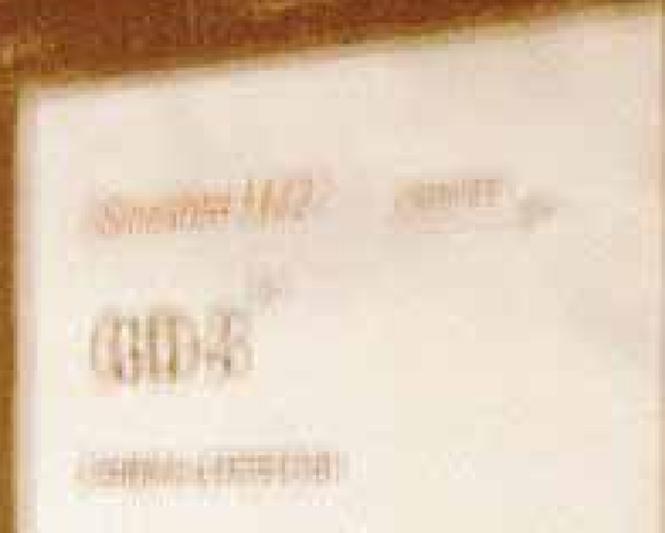


U.S. Air Force photos/Tech. Sgt. Christian Michael



█ Gulfport Combat Readiness Training Center █

Gulfport, Miss.

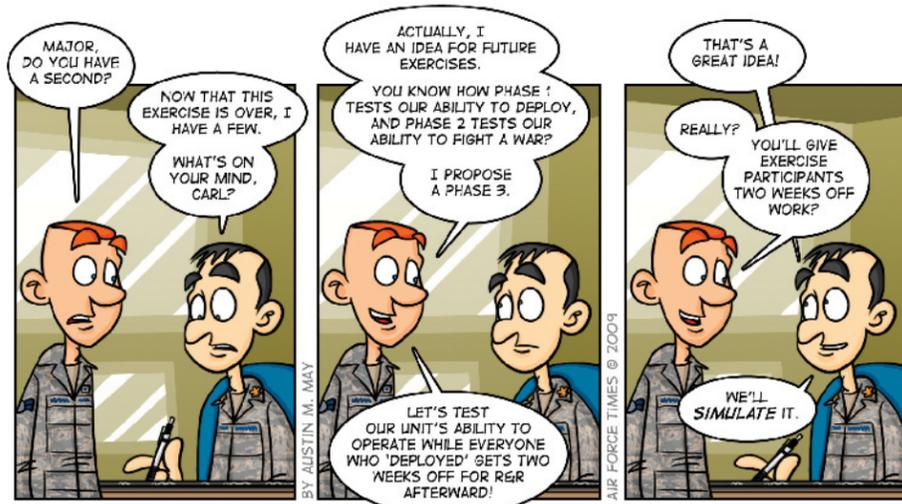


Upper left, members of the unit control center pow-wow in preparation for communications from other agencies via phones and loud speakers. Left, Tech. Sgt. Partick Clark, 25th Aerial Port Squadron cargo processing, performs checks on M-9 paper in his area. Above, Lt. Col. George Baird, 25th Aerial Port Squadron commander, uses oral communication techniques at the emergency operations center.



Left, Tech. Sgt. Sonya Myers, 25th Aerial Port Squadron, clears her weapon under the supervision of Staff Sgt. Bobby Eller, rear, and Staff Sgt. Timothy Russell, 908th Maintenance Squadron. Above, from left, Senior Master Sgt. Paula Foust goes over a base map with Lt. Col. Nancy Westbrook, both from 94th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron. Below, from left, Senior Airman Abby Helton, seated, and Staff Sgt. Natalie Parnell, both from 25th Aerial Port Squadron, maintain morale at the passenger service terminal.





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BRIEFS

Combined Federal Campaign

The Combined Federal Campaign began Sept. 14. Anyone interested in getting involved can contact their local CFC representative.

Wing staff — Lt. Col. Nancy Stephenson at 953-9080

Mission support flight — Capt. Michael McDonald at 953-5441

Maintenance group — Tech. Sgt. Quincey Hester at 953-7306

Airlift squadron — Staff Sgt. Kimberly Pettway at 593-2779

Computer requirement

The deadline for filling out the Air Force User Agreement Statement - Notice and Consent Provision was Aug. 13. Nearly 600 members of the 908th Airlift Wing have not yet completed the form.

Anyone who does not complete the form and return to Master Sgt. John O'Connor, 908th Communications Flight, by the end of October UTA is subject to account deletion.

For more information, call Sergeant O'Connor at 953-8202.

Exercise and inspection

The Operational Readiness Inspection with the 94th and 911th airlift wings is scheduled for Dec. 4-11 at Gulfport Combat Readiness Training Center in Gulfport, Miss.

Southern Flyer submissions

Deadline for submissions for the November edition of the Southern Flyer is Oct. 14. Submissions may include news briefs, feature possibilities and photos.

PROMOTION ORDERS

ENLISTED

- Senior Master Sergeant*
Thomas J. Corporon
- Master Sergeant*
Jason A. Dunn
Crystal S. Hamlet
- Technical Sergeant*
(PEP) Nicholas P. Kennelly
(PEP) Brady G. Newman
Dexter W. Patterson
Karen Adair Rhodes
Tiesha R. Simmons
(PEP) Eunice Stockdale
Tyler Jane Venafro
David R. Wilson
- Staff Sergeant*
Quiana S. Carter
(PEP) Heath W. Garrison
Keondrick T. Johnson
Alvarez B. Kennedy
- Senior Airman*
Kevin W. Garrett
Gabrielle K. Stallworth
- Airman 1st Class*
Leigh A. Fincher
Daniel J. Holder
Christopher R. Schlotterbeck

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