

Southern Flyer



908th Airlift Wing (Air Force Reserve Command), Maxwell Air Force Base, Montgomery, Ala., Vol. 43, Issue 9, September 2006

TV show lauds 908th cop's role in securing conviction in decade old schoolgirl rape case

Earlier this year the Arts & Entertainment network's TV series "Cold Case Files" acknowledged 908th Security Forces Squadron's Staff Sgt. Richard Peterson's role in assisting Rochester, N.Y., Police Department solve several nearly 10-year-old schoolgirl rape cases.

On Sept. 3, 2005, as chief investigator with the Clayton (Ala.) Police Department, Sergeant Peterson, a highly decorated civilian law enforcement officer now serving as a special investigator with the State of Alabama, reported to the scene of a rape where the victim was assaulted, raped and sodomized.

He diligently tracked down leads, interviewed potential witnesses and developed a suspect through the Law Enforcement network.

Police investigators put together a photo line up and showed it to the victim, who made a positive identification leading to the suspect's arrest.

The sergeant interviewed the suspect and personally collected a DNA sample which was turned over to the State Forensic Science Lab. His request to compare DNA on a National level resulted in a match in the Rochester, N.Y., Schoolgirl Rapist cases.

The unsolved cases involved the rapes of four

young women ranging from ages 12 to 17, gripping the Rochester area in fear. Unable to catch the rapist and facing a statute of limitations on the cases that occurred in a short span in 1995, Rochester authorities successfully employed a then relatively new technique, a John Doe indictment, based on DNA evidence. The John Doe indictment effectively stopped the clock on the statute of limitations.

Based on Peterson's police work, the Rochester case now had a prime suspect who was later tried and sentenced to 85 years in prison and four women, now adults, were able to move forward with their lives. Sergeant Peterson's diligence nor success are surprising said 908th SFS's Master Sgt. Tim Oliver. Peterson, the security forces ART said, has great success in the squadron, completing his professional military educa-

tion in minimal time, and advancing to fire team leader, a technical sergeant position, quickly.

Wing members interested in seeing the Rochester, N.Y. Schoolgirl Rape case profile should check their local listings for scheduled airings of A&E TV's Cold Case Files episode 112, "Innocence Stolen/Danger at the Door." (Information provided by Tech. Sgt. James Harrell, 908th SFS unit public affairs rep)



Photo by Lt. Col. Jerry Lobb

908th SFS's Staff Sgt. Richard Peterson, one of the state's top civilian police investigators.

UFC star visits unit

Spike TV reality show "Ultimate Fighter — Season One" finalist Kenny Florian chats with 357th Airlift Squadron navigator Capt. Kayce Weakley and C-130 pilot Lt. Col. Jan Sztuka as the aircrew continue to load 32 unit members onboard a 908th AW C-130 bound for Nellis AFB, Nev., to support the Red Flag exercise. Florian's Season One live broadcast finale bout attracted over 3 million viewers. He visited Maxwell Aug. 18 and 19 to visit the troops and participate in an Army and Air Force Exchange Service promotion.



Photo by Jeff Melvin

A message from the top and its true meaning to Air Force Reservists

By Col. William J. "Bill" Forshey Jr.
Commander, 908th Mission Support Group

The July 7, 2006 Letter to Airmen from Secretary of the Air Force Wynne titled "Recognizing the Total Force" is a must read for all Reservists: Better still, go to the Air Force portal at <https://www.my.af.mil/> or the 908th AW website at <http://www.908aw.afrc.af.mil/> download the letter, make a color copy and put it on your wall.

The SECAF congratulates and publicly identifies what you do every day in your service to this great country as a member of the United States Air Force. Paragraph 2 states, "We simply could not accomplish today's dynamic mission without the Total Force integration of our Guard, Reserve, and Active Duty Force." In the next paragraph, he says, "Our Active Duty, Guardsmen, and Reservists stand side by side in our fight in the Global War on Terrorism".

The most important part of his message is embedded in paragraph 4 where the Secretary says, "So what does this mean for you, the individual Airman? First, this means that we have a healthy respect for those Total Force members that support our mission. Second, we need to adhere to the set standards to ensure that as we assemble the Total Force we remain prepared to execute the assigned mission. Thirdly, we need to use the diversity represented by the Total Force to continually look for better ways to accomplish our mission."

Not really sure if you realize what I just shared with you, but our Secretary of the Air Force just paid Reservists the greatest compliment I have ever seen put in writing in over 34 years of service. The Secretary also threw

down the gauntlet. Let me regress a little before I give you the subliminal message contained within his "Letter to Airmen".

Effective Oct. 1, 2006, we are now authorized and required to wear an Air Force Reserve Command patch on our BDUs and flight suits. No longer will we be blurred in with the Air Mobility Command personnel; we will be seen as what we are and always have been - Air Force Reservists. This comes with a price. We must now always be cognizant of the fact that we will always be more easily recognizable as Reservists; not just from our graying or absent hair but because we will now wear an AFRC logo on our uniforms. Wear the AFRC patch proudly; Reservists have worked hard to get that formal recognition.

Now let's return to the Secretary's message. In it he said we need to adhere to the set standards. That means the Air Force Standards. No longer will we be "weekend warriors" sort of complying when we want to; we are full up rounds for the battle and need to stay focused on that. It means we can no longer push the limits or ignore the dress/appearance issues nor can we press the test on safety issues. We are in the fight as equal partners and need to adhere to and help uphold those areas. Our safety and survival depends on it.

I have been around the Air Force Reserve for nearly 35 years and witnessed a great deal of change, especially in the years since 9-11-01. Now it is our time to lead by example. If you see someone not in compliance, identify that fact promptly but respectfully. Know the AFIs and the policies, don't assume you know them or



Col. Bill Forshey

take someone else's outhouse philosophy as the gospel. Read them yourself -- the more of us that know them the better. Let's help keep each other in compliance in all areas so we have a safe and professional Air Force.

I am proud to have served with and still serve with some of the most talented professionals in this unit over the years, but I have to tell you, some of them would not and do not fit into today's Air Force. You and I, we have an obligation to convince them to conform or to leave. My wish is that they stay and support the mission. There was a time when being different may have been the chic thing to do but that time is past. We want equal treatment, equal pay and equal recognition but it comes with a price tag -- strict compliance with all the rules. Over the last few years we have made giant strides in getting to parity with the active duty on pay and benefits but we are not quite there yet. Close but no cigar. Now is the time for us to prove our worth and press to get our folks the rest of those benefits.

In closing, I want to share with you remarks former Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. John Jumper once made in an interview. "A person creates a new lower standard when they walk past a problem and don't actively address the situation," the general said. That philosophy holds true for dress and appearance as well as safety issues. Don't ignore the issue, address it, be brave but professional. I know you will continue to serve this nation proudly and I am proud to serve with every one of you.



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Editorial policy
Editorial content of the "Southern Flyer" is edited, prepared and provided by the 908th Airlift Wing Public Affairs Office.

All photos are Air Force photos unless otherwise indicated.

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 UTA. The submission deadline for articles or information is the Wednesday two weeks prior to the UTA.

For information about this schedule, call Jeff Melvin at (334) 953-7874.

AF Reserve facing recruiting, retention challenges

Note to editors: The following is the concluding article in a four-part series on testimony before the U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations' Subcommittee on Defense April 26, 2006, by Lt. Gen. John A. Bradley, chief of Air Force Reserve and Air Force Reserve Command commander.

WASHINGTON - During the past five years, the Air Force Reserve has had great success in getting and keeping the people.

That could change in the next couple of years, said Lt. Gen. John A. Bradley, chief of Air Force Reserve and Air Force Reserve Command commander, speaking to the U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations' Subcommittee on Defense April 26.

The command will reduce

its force by 10 percent under the Air Force Transformation Flight Plan and close or realign its forces as a result of Base Realignment and Closure actions.

"With the personnel reductions beginning in fiscal year 2008 and the realignment and closure of Reserve installations due to BRAC, about 20 percent of our force will be directly impacted by the planned changes through new and emerging missions as well as mission adjustments to satisfy Air Force requirements," he said. "In light of all these changes, we expect the recruiting and retention environment will be turbulent and dynamic and challenging."

Unlike the Regular Air Force, the Air Force Reserve cannot move people around the country to ease the

transition during a unit drawdown.

"In drawdown organizations, the focus will be on maintaining mission capability until the last day of operations, while also trying to retain as much of the force as possible and placing them in other Air Force Reserve organizations," the general said. "To accomplish this, we will need to employ force management initiatives that will provide our affected units with options to retain highly trained personnel. This contrasts greatly with the organizations gaining new missions and/or authorizations.

"It's important to remember that the Air Force Reserve is a local force and that growing units will face significant recruiting challenges when considering the availability of adequately

qualified and trained personnel," he said. "As always, we will focus on maximizing prior-service accessions."

General Bradley said the Air Force Reserve may benefit from the Air Force transformation plan because critical skills in the Regular Air Force closely match those in the Air Force Reserve. He said getting prior-service people from other services could prove costlier because they would likely require more extensive retraining.

"The bottom line is that retaining highly trained individuals is paramount.

"Retention must be considered from a total force perspective, and any force drawdown incentives should include Selected Reserve participation as a viable option." (AFRC News Service)

Chaplain finds inspiration in midst of frustration, you can too

By Chaplain (Capt.) David Dersch
908th AW Chaplain

This Monday is the fifth anniversary of 9/11, the day the World Trade Center towers were destroyed, the Pentagon was attacked with the loss of 189 souls in the plane and inside, and 44 American citizens died as their jet plunged into the ground in Pennsylvania. Over 2,000 children lost a parent that day.

Even as I write this, the news has just broken that a plot to blow up 10 airliners traveling from England to America has been thwarted. Three thousand rockets have fallen on civilians in Israel, and hundreds are still being fired each day.

I wish I could write something positive and uplifting right now. But the truth is, I don't feel uplifted.

I feel a deep sorrow for all those who lost their lives and for the families left behind after those dreadful attacks five years ago. I feel righteously angry that there

are people out there still plotting such horrific acts. I feel frustrated that some of our fellow citizens don't realize the long-term dangers our country and Judeo-Christian culture face.

But in the midst of such depressing emotions, I am inspired. I am inspired by the men and women of the 908th I see every day, doing their jobs with integrity and

excellence. I am inspired by those who go beyond the call of duty and volunteer to serve their country. I am inspired by the fact that our armed services continue to meet their recruiting needs.

I am inspired by the word of God, that "where sin abounded, grace abounded more." And I am inspired by the truth that although Iraq seems to be plunging into civil

war, as you read the accounts of our soldiers there, they are making a difference in the lives of so many individual Iraqis. We are "returning good for evil," and hearts and lives are being changed for the better.

I am inspired by the truth that God is in control, and "that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him" (Romans 8:28).

Giving makes living worthwhile

The 908th Top Three Association requests your support

By Senior Master Sgt. Cynthia F. Bennett
908th AW/JA Law Office Manager

Rod Serling's "Twilight Zone" series once featured a story about a gambler who dies and is transported to a room where there is a gambling table and dealer. Every time he rolls the dice, he wins. Every hand he holds is a winner. The living quarters are plush and outfitted with everything he wants. At first, the man

believes he is in heaven. He should be happy, but he is completely and totally alone. The fun of sharing his winnings with someone else is missing. He finally concludes that he is not in heaven, as he had first thought, he is in hell.

Albert Einstein believed that "Only a life lived for others is worth living." It might also be said that, "Only a life lived giving to and sharing with others is worth living." Writer Peter Marshall

said it another way: "The measure of life is not its duration, but its donation."

During Christmas 2005, the 908th Top Three Association mirrored the beliefs of Serling, Einstein, and Marshall. Under the leadership of 908th AW Command Chief Master Sgt. Amos Moore, and along with donations from several

Continued on page 4



Top 3 Association secretary Master Sgt. Nancy Butler, right, and Master Sgt. Deborah Webb, left, talk to wing junior enlisted personnel during a 908th AW Top 3 Association-sponsored 'pizza and mentoring' session held at the Maxwell AFB Enlisted Club Aug. 5.

Giving makes living worthwhile

Continued from page 3

members in the 908th, the Top Three Association donated over 200 gift bags containing toiletry items to Veteran Hospitals in Tuskegee and in Montgomery. The veterans were very pleased and happy to see military members (dressed in uniform) entering their rooms to make their Christmas bag deliveries.

The spirit of giving was all over the 908th and the community at large. For instance, some members were able to obtain toothbrushes and toothpaste from their dentists; some were able to gather lotion or soap samples from their favorite vendor; and some were able to persuade their favorite supermarket or department store to donate combs, brushes, shaving creams, deodorants, candy canes, and peppermint swirls. The gift-bag effort is only one of the major projects sponsored by the 908th Top Three Association.

Another major Top Three project is enlisted mentoring. Chief Master Sgt. Moore began his tour as 908th Command Chief in July 2002. His top priority was to implement mentoring and feedback opportunities for junior enlisted members. He immediately began to garner interest in a Top Three organization. The 908th Top Three Association was chartered in January 2004 and since that time, has held three enlisted mentoring sessions. The sessions consist of a panel discussion by Top Three members and a question and answer period—over pizza and drinks.

Enlisted members who attended the

sessions indicated that they liked and appreciated the opportunity to ask questions and be mentored. They also enjoyed the pizza. Mentoring sessions are generally announced and held immediately after the Saturday UTA at the NCO Club.

The 908th Top Three Association currently has over 70 members. Since its initial charter, the Top Three Executive Council has met monthly, and as of September 2006, all members will have an opportunity to attend council meetings and render input.

The miracle is this—the more we share, the more we have. With your help, we quote the Staple Singers: “Let’s do it again.”

If you are a member of the Top Three Association, we need your continued support during mentoring sessions and at Top Three meetings.

To all members of the 908th Airlift Wing, we need your support to achieve our Second Annual Christmas Gift-Bag Donation to Veterans. Please bring mini-sized toiletry items to the office of Command Chief Moore (Bldg. 1056, Rm 210). Items may include (but are not limited to) shaving cream, combs, lotions, soaps, toothpaste, toothbrush, bath oil, deodorant, and mouthwash. All items are due not later than November UTA.

Thank you for your support; our efforts would yield less success without YOU. Success in life has nothing to do with what you gain or accomplish—it’s what you do for others.

Sexual harassment complaints on the rise: Let’s all perform a self evaluation

By 2nd Lt. Darrell Bogan
Chief, 908th AW Military Equal Opportunity

Sexual harassment complaints have increased within the 908th AW in recent months. It is important that we all constantly evaluate ourselves to ensure that we are not engaging in behaviors that someone may find offensive.

AFI 36-2706 defines sexual harassment as “a form of sex discrimination that involves unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment includes, unwanted cat calls (Hey Baby; Sweet Thing, or Hunk,) touching, jokes, e-mails, and conversations of a sexual nature.”

The chain of command is responsible for creating an environment free from unlawful discrimination and sexual harassment. All commanders should encourage those in leadership positions to practice an open-door policy so that members feel comfortable using their chain-of-command to identify and correct unlawful discriminatory practices. Remember that unlawful discrimination and sexual harassment are contrary to good order and discipline and counterproductive to combat readiness and mission accomplishments.

The 908th Wing Commander’s Policy letter asks that individuals who feel they are victims of discrimination and sexual harassment voice their concerns to their chain-of-command, Military Equal Opportunity Office (MEO), Equal Employment Opportunity counselor (for civilians) or Inspector General without fear of retaliation.

The MEO staff is located in Bldg. 1056, 2nd Floor, Room 216 adjacent to the Legal Office. We are available during normal duty hours on UTA weekends and we can be reached at ext. 3-6672.

Recertify eligibility for w/dep housing rate or risk lower pay

By Linda D. Roberts
908th Financial Analysis Officer

All unit Reservists receiving W/Dependent rate Basic Allowance for Housing must validate their proof of dependency during the September, October, and November UTA weekends. The recertification process has changed and Finance must see a copy of the documents that show proof of dependency. Finance does not maintain copies of these documents.

Those claiming a "spouse" dependent must bring a valid (legible) copy of their marriage certificate. Single parents claiming a child must provide a copy of the child's

birth certificate. If they have more than one child, they only need to provide the birth certificate of the youngest child because this will allow the reserve member to receive BAH for a longer period of time since the termination date is based on the child's date of birth. Members who are divorced and paying child support must provide a copy of the divorce decree and a copy of birth certificate for the child(ren) mentioned on the divorce decree establishing child support responsibilities. Any member completing an AF Form 594, BAH Form, must also inform the Reserve Pay Office if they are married

to an active duty member or a Reservist.

Failure to validate W/Dependent BAH during this time period will result in members' BAH reverting to the single rate. Lists of those currently receiving W/Dependant BAH entitlements will be provided to the Unit Commanders prior to the September UTA.

To help assist our larger units with this process, the Finance Office will have a representative in the following unit orderly rooms to certify the AF Form 594:

MXG Orderly Room, Sunday, Sept. 10, 9 to 11 a.m.

OG Orderly Room (OG/OSF/AS), Sunday, Oct. 15, 9 to 11 a.m.

ASTS Orderly Room, Sunday, Nov. 5, 9 to 11 a.m.

For all other personnel, the finance office will certify the BAH forms on Saturdays of the Sep, Oct, and Nov UTAs from 9 to 11 a.m. and 1 to 3 p.m.. In December, we will provide a list of names to the units for those members who did not validate their BAH entitlements and whose rates will revert to single BAH. Members who have been deployed during these three months will be exempt until they return. Members who have rescheduled UTAs, may come by the Reserve Pay Office Monday through Friday during normal business hours.

Now's time for senior NCOs to seek PME slot

Air Force Reserve personnel, unlike their active duty counterparts, meet a central selection board to compete for limited quota allocations for the USAF Senior Noncommissioned Officer Academy.

The selection board for FY 07 SNCOA in residence classes will be held Sunday of the November UTA, wing training officials said.

In order to allow enough time for review, the packages need to be in the wing training office by close of business, Saturday of the November UTA, Nov. 4.

Applicants should provide the training office a civilian e-mail address or phone number so they may be contacted if there are problems with their packages.

The class dates are: Jan. 4 – Feb. 21; March 6 to April 19; May 15 to June 29 and July 31 to Sept. 14

The procedures for requesting to attend Senior Noncommissioned Officer Academy in-residence course are spelled out below.

First ALL applicants must meet all of the following criteria:

- Be in the grade of Master Sergeant or higher
- Have a General ASVAB score of 50 or higher
- Have computer capabilities

- Not be in upgrade or re-training status

- Be in compliance with AF Physical Fitness Standards

Air Reserve Technicians (ARTs) attending in civilian status must meet all of the above requirements and sign a Student Attendance Agreement.

Application package will include:

- Application – AF Form 4036

How to input Fitness Score on AF Form 4036:

- Block 19 instead of Height/Weight: Indicate members Composite Fitness Score (CFS)

- Block 20 instead of Max Allowable Weight: Indicate date of members CFS

- Block 21 Body Fat Measurement: N/A

- Block 22 Max Allowable BFM: N/A

- Block 23: Must include a statement to the effect: I certify MSgt/SMSgt XXXXXXXX completed his/her base line testing to achieve the above CFS on the date indicated.

- Current Rip signed on Pg

- Last two EPRs

- Full length color photograph – 8 x 10, ¾ turn, Service Blues/no ribbons no service jacket (include 2 copies and a digital copy)

- Rank order class dates available for attendance

If member meets all of the above criteria, the application process will be as follows:

- Application package will be sent to wing education and training for review to ensure all above prerequisites/requirements have been met

- The wing command chief master sergeant, assisted by wing education and training, will conduct interview selection board, consisting of the wing command chief master sergeant and five wing chief master sergeants

- Results of selection board will be submitted to wing commander for final approval

The wing education and training office will submit the name(s) of the selectees to the appropriate RSG/DPT for consolidation. Any substitutions will be approved by the command chief master sergeant and the wing commander prior to submission

The RSG/DPT office will forward the selected names to HQ AFRC/DPTS to release the quotas. DPTS will fill seats/quotas by name from approved spreadsheet.

Wing senior NCOs experiencing problems with their application packages or who have questions, should call the education and training office at 953-6671/6678.

Tell a friend, annual alumni reunion dinner set for Sept.

All past and present unit members are invited to the 908th AW Alumni Association Reunion Sept. 9 at 6:30 p.m. at the Falcon's Nest on Maxwell AFB-Gunter Annex.

Noting that people are the key to a successful reunion, Alumni Association committee member Gene Beasley said, "We hope everyone returns and enjoys each others company. Even though we try to reach everyone, we miss some. If you know any current or former member who hasn't heard about the reunion, please tell them."

Beasley added that those unable to attend should still contact him so they can remain on the alumni association mailing list.

If you need further information, please contact Gene Beasley (334) 365-4721 or e-mail Beasley at: gb306@bellsouth.net (home) or work e-mail: gene.beasley.ctr@csd.disa.mil

Beware of prescription pharmaceuticals from internet sales

Drug dealers are using the Internet to sell their drugs. Some people believe that ordering drugs on the Internet --- particularly prescription pharmaceuticals (pills) --- is a safe, legal and easy way to get high. Nothing could be further from the truth.

There are millions of websites offering drugs such as Vicodin™ and Xanax™ to Internet users. Spam messages to user's e-mails advertise that these drugs are available with the click of a mouse and a credit card number. Many sites claim you don't need a doctor's prescription to buy these powerful drugs. And some ask you to fill out a bogus questionnaire to make their drug dealing look more legitimate. What you don't know can really hurt you.

Here's a few things to be aware of:

- Selling or buying controlled substances without a legitimate doctor's prescription is a violation of law.
- Many of the websites offering controlled substances are located overseas. Usually, there are no doctors involved in these enterprises. You have no idea where the drugs are made, what's actually in them, or who's behind the drug ring selling you controlled substances. This kind of a transaction is a felony (a violation of Sections 957 and 960 of Title 21, United States Code) --- very serious stuff.

- You might think that these pills come from a sterile factory overseas. Think twice: often these products are stored in trucks, cars, bathrooms, or homes with unsanitary conditions. Why would anyone put this in his or her body?

- People have died from taking

"The websites we targeted today gave an illusion of safety and legitimacy, displaying photos depicting professional pharmacists in white lab coats in a sterile environment. But in fact, the drugs they marketed were smuggled from India and Europe and stashed in cars and homes, and stuffed in plastic bags. What arrived on customers' doorsteps were drugs in the proverbial plain brown wrapper with unreadable labels, no dosage directions or warnings, and worse, sometimes with the wrong dose or even the wrong drug."

— DEA Administrator Karen Tandy, April 20, 2005

controlled substances without a doctor's prescription. Many of these pills were ordered over the Internet.

They say you don't need a prescription, or that filling out a questionnaire will get you what you want. What they don't tell you is that under either of those circumstances, ordering controlled substances such as Vicodin™ or Xanax™ over the web is against the law.

Copies of medical findings and reports including prescriptions, even if provided by your civilian provider, are to be

forwarded to 908 ASTS Medical Records (Bldg. 711) for inclusion in the member's medical record.

Read more about drugs of abuse at: <http://www.justthinktwice.com/drugfacts> or <https://wwwmil.afrc.af.mil/TRUEBLUE/>. Source: (<http://www.justthinktwice.com/drugfacts/dealers.cfm>) (Nov 05)

Modified C-130 ready for war on terrorism

A former 908th AW C-130, aircraft 286, has the distinction of becoming the first-of-its-kind, MC-130W. The highly modified C-130, the first of a dozen such modified aircraft, was presented to Air Force Special Operations Command in a ceremony at Robins AFB, Ga., June 28. The modified C-130 will replace special operations aircraft lost in combat. The new aircraft will be able to accomplish many of the same missions as the previous ones, plus they have the ability to air-to-air refuel special operations helicopters.



Photo by Sue Sapp

Service before self

Chaplain's assistant embodies Air Force Core Value in military, civilian life

By Jeff Melvin
908th AW Public Affairs

Chaplain's assistant Tech. Sgt. Tonya Peterson has a strong desire to serve, the members of this wing, the tenants of the apartment complex she manages in her civilian job and now the residents of Lithonia, Ga., where this past January she was elected to an at large seat on the city council.

Quite an accomplishment for someone that readily admits "she had no interest in politics" and even now prefers to be called a 'lawmaker' due to her ingrained skepticism about politicians.

The sergeant and her fellow 'lawmakers' have their work cut out as Lithonia, a tiny city of 2,200, 18 miles east of Atlanta, tries to recover from severe financial struggles following debt restructuring while trying to retain autonomy despite its close proximity to burgeoning Atlanta.

"Everything around us is changing. We're trying to adapt, catch up and move forward," she said describing the daunting task ahead for the City of Lithonia.

The city wants to remain 'uniquely Lithonia,' charting its own destiny instead of being dragged along in Atlanta's wake, she said.

"My goal is to help advance the city, to help the city become its own individual entity. We just need to annex and expand. We need to look after our own interests," said the political newcomer who was so hesitant about politics in general and her qualifications in particular that she turned down months of repeated requests from the Lithonia Mayor to run for one of the four upcoming vacancies of the council.

The mayor made the offer after meeting the transplanted Florida native when he dropped in unannounced on a neighborhood watch meeting she set up for tenants of the apartment complex she managed.

She spent months of soul searching, consultation with family and friends and weighing and balancing before filing minutes before deadline.

"I finally said, 'You'll never know if you don't make the effort.' I believe that about everything in life. Too many times we become paralyzed with inaction because of fear. I decided to overcome my fears and pursue it."

She said she headed to the filing office while at the same time "making detours so I couldn't get there. About 10 minutes before the filing deadline the mayor called and asked the city clerk who was there, and she told him I was. He was overjoyed."

Previously the mayor had pointed out that in her job as a property manager she was already running a city. Dealing with citizens, contractors, budgets, etc., -- she was a mayor of sorts already.

That knowledge and her desire to serve helped her put her fears aside. That same desire led her to accept her supervisor's recommendation

that she become a chaplain's assistant five years ago when now retiring Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Bob Anders asked the Chief's Group for nominees of strong spiritual background deeply involved in Christian activities to help him minister to the wing's members.

That time she needed no prodding, she readily accepted the chaplain's offer when after reviewing her records, talking to her supervisor and interviewing her, Chaplain Anders asked her to assist him.

"I had always wanted to do something like that but just didn't know how," said the 16-year unit member who cross trained into the chaplain's assistant program after 11 years in supply.

Neither she nor Chaplain Anders regrets that decision. The Alabama State University graduate who's now pursuing a master's degree in divinity has been his best assistant, Chaplain Anders said.

"None of my previous chaplain's assistants have had her unique combination of administrative skills and

spirituality. She's the best," he said.

No doubt the citizens of Lithonia will soon say the same for the reluctant 'lawmaker,' who simply wants to serve, the members of this unit, her tenants, her constituents and eventually "children in a Christian academy setting."



Courtesy photo

Lithonia (Ga.) Councilwoman Tonya Peterson



Chaplain's assistant Tech. Sgt. Tonya Peterson consults her 'governing regulation.'

Photo by Staff Sgt. Jay Ponder

AFRC leader tours unit

Maj. Gen. Hanferd "Rusty" Moen Jr., flanked by 25th APS's Master Sgt. Melvin Watts and 908th Mission Support Group commander Col. Bill Forshey Jr., looks at photos showcasing aerial port personnel and mission activities during a tour of 908th facilities Aug. 1. General Moen is the Headquarters Air Force Reserve Command A2/A3 (director of Intelligence, Air, Space and Information Operations). In this capacity he oversees all Reserve operational assets and capabilities, to include tactical fighter, aerial refueling, strategic and tactical airlift, special operations, intelligence, combat rescue, hurricane surveillance, aeromedical evacuation, aerial spray and modular airborne fire fighting capability.



Justice Department website explains military rights

By Jim Garamone
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON (AFPN) -- The Department of Justice has launched a website to protect servicemembers' rights, said the attorney general.

Alberto R. Gonzales, speaking to the Disabled American Veterans annual convention in Chicago, said the Justice Department has made it a priority to enforce civil rights laws for American servicemembers.

"The law recognizes that although we can never thank you enough for your service, we can take away some of the worries that Soldiers might face when they are deployed," he said in prepared remarks.

The government promises that servicemembers' jobs will still be theirs when they come home, and that they cannot be discriminated against by their employers because of their military service. The United States vows that servicemembers will be able to vote and that their vote will be counted. And it promises that servicemembers "will have procedural protections in civil actions, like lawsuits or property repossessions, when serving overseas."

The Justice Department website, www.servicemembers.gov,

outlines the rights servicemembers have under the Uniformed Services Employment and Re-employment Rights Act, the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act and the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act.

"These basic civil rights are enforced by the Department of Justice, and I can assure you that the department's staff and prosecutors are deeply committed to these enforcement efforts," Mr. Gonzales said.

"We feel that it is an honor to serve those in uniform in this way. It is our way of saying thank you for your service." The attorney general said these are not just "pie in the sky" rights, but issues that directly affect people.

In one case, Justice Department officials filed its first complaint alleging that American Airlines violated rights of employees who also serve as military pilots. The case was brought on behalf of three military pilots employed by American Airlines. It states that the airline reduced the employment benefits of pilots who had taken military leave, while not reducing the same benefits for pilots who had taken similar, non-military leave, Mr. Gonzales said.

"In another vivid example of the people for whom we enforce these laws, the department recently won a consent

decreed from an employer who terminated employment of a serviceman named Richard White the very same day that Richard told his boss he was being called to active duty," the attorney general said.

"The consent decree requires the employer to pay back wages to Mr. White. What leads an employer to treat a Soldier like an inconvenience is something for a higher power to judge. But here on Earth, we have USERRA, and we'll use it for Richard White and for soldiers like him, as often as is necessary."

Voting is another servicemember right the Justice Department guards. "Earlier this year, (the department) addressed long-standing structural issues affecting uniformed military personnel posted both in this country and overseas who wished to vote in North Carolina, South Carolina and Alabama," Mr. Gonzales said.

These states had run-off elections too close to the primary elections to allow these voters to receive and return ballots. With cooperation from state election officials, the department was able to redress each of these violations.

"As the 2006 general election approaches, we will continue vigilant protection of the voting rights of

servicemembers, their families and other overseas citizens," he said.

Mr. Gonzales also addressed the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act.

"Thanks to this law, men and women serving in Iraq and Afghanistan have procedural protections in place that will allow them to be less distracted by litigation back home -- by someone trying to repossess a leased car, evict their spouse and children, sell their house at an auction or run up penalties on credit cards with 21-percent interest rates," he said.

"It's hard to respond to a civil lawsuit while you're focused on improvised explosive devices, and the law protects servicemembers for that reason."

Enforcement of this law is a readiness and morale issue, he said.

"Men and women in uniform, like all Americans, have to honor their obligations," he said.

"However, Congress long ago decided, wisely I think, to provide protections to them against lawsuits while deployed overseas on active duty."

Gonzales urged any servicemember with questions to go to the Justice Department web site. Military lawyers can help servicemembers and their families navigate through the laws.

Retirement application process centralized for reservists

By Tech. Sgt. Rob Mims
Air Reserve Personnel Center Public Affairs

DENVER – Beginning July 31, all eligible members of the Air Force Reserve will submit their retirement application electronically via the virtual Personnel Center Guard and Reserve, a 24/7 customer service Web portal operated by the Air Reserve Personnel Center here.

“The ultimate goal is to improve and streamline how we deliver services to our reservists,” said Col. Ann Shippy, ARPC commander. “We’re leveraging technology and Web application to help strike the balance necessary to continue to deliver service with fewer personnelists.”

Previously, reservists had to visit their local military personnel flight, complete the required retirement application package, submit it to their supervisor or commander, and send it to ARPC.

This new Web-enabled service is available at any time from anywhere in the world and will give Airmen the ability to monitor the status of their application from start to finish. Reservists can log on

to the vPC-GR at <http://arpc.afrc.af.mil/support/default.asp> to begin the process.

When the submission is received, the customer is e-mailed a tracking number. After the member’s commander (or program manager for individual mobilization augmentees) has electronically endorsed the application, the Reserve Personnel Contact Center at ARPC will verify eligibility and finalize the application.

Once approved, the vPC-GR will send e-mail notifications to the member and the person’s commander or program manager. This new process only applies to members who have not yet initiated a retirement application. This process does not apply to Airmen who have already applied for retirement through their local MPF.

ARPC and the National Guard Bureau are working together to expand this capability to Air National Guard members in the near future.

The technical wizards and personnel specialists of the Service Delivery Transformation Team at ARPC continuously study which processes handled by local

MPFs can be centralized and automated at ARPC.

Craig Carter, Thomas Laursen and Gregory Zipprich from ARPC’s Personnel Data Systems directorate, developed vPC-GR from scratch with limited investment while expanding on an Air Force standard case management tool that is fully integrated to Web service delivery. Each time a new process is tagged for automation, the team works on developing the application to deliver the service.

In the future, centralized services should account for nearly every aspect of every reservists’ personnel actions, from initial enlistment to far beyond retirement and everything in between.

ARPC and the Air Force Personnel Center are working simultaneously on centralizing and automating many of their processes for all Airmen and civilians in the Total Force.

For more information about ARPC Personnel Service Delivery, visit <http://arpc.afrc.af.mil/psd/default.asp>. (Air Force Reserve Command News Service

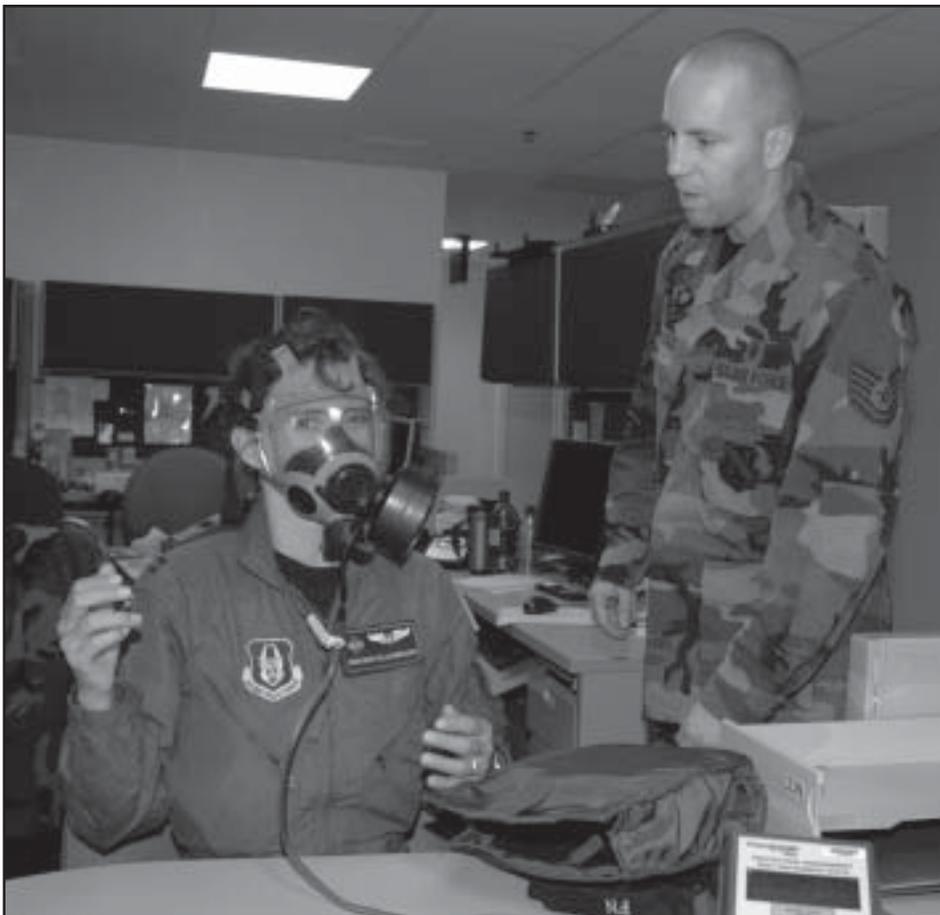


Photo by Jeff Melvin

It's getting hot in here

908th AES flight nurse Capt. Cinnamon Kellenberger undergoes mask fit testing with the assistance of 42nd Air Base Wing bioenvironmental engineering technician Tech. Sgt. Troy Poole. Mask fit testing is generally held each UTA. September's testing is set for 9 to 11 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 9, on the second floor of the Maxwell AFB Clinic, Bldg. 760.

AF releases Phase 2 of climate survey

WASHINGTON (AFPN) -- The Air Force has launched Phase 2 of its climate survey, focused on Air Force culture.

This online survey is part of a large-scale study to understand the culture at large: the values, beliefs and expectations that shape people's everyday behavior. This effort differs from the usual climate survey, which examines command climate in particular units at specific points in time.

In order to reduce the survey burden on the Air Force population, a randomly selected subset of more than 300,000 Air Force civilian, Guard, Reserve and active-duty members were sent direct e-mail invitations to participate in the survey. However, maximum participation is desired for this important undertaking.

All Air Force members willing to participate in the survey are encouraged to access it anytime at the secure website at afclimatesurvey.af.mil/phase2. The survey takes about 30 minutes to complete and will be available through Sept. 10. Because culture extends beyond particular leaders or units, unit-specific reports will not be generated as they were for Phase 1.

The results of both the surveys and focus groups will be used to document aspects of the organization's culture that have never before been captured, and to help inform senior leaders of Air Force culture and force development efforts.

Reserve personnel center expands online services

DENVER – In today's virtual world, people can shop, perform bank transactions or complete college classes online.

The people at the Air Reserve Personnel Center here are working to offer similar conveniences to members of the Air Force Reserve Command and Air National Guard through the virtual Personnel Center-Guard and Reserve, a Web portal located on the ARPC Web site at <http://arpc.afrc.af.mil>.

The most recent capability, launched by the center July 31, is retirements and associated processes. These new capabilities will help people conduct transactions online without having to visit a military personnel flight.

On March 31, the center gave people the capability to correct their duty history online. In addition to correcting their duty history, customers also can:

- Obtain their 16-year letter (re-issue);
- Send a letter to the promotion board;
- Receive board counseling;
- Acquire a mortgage letter;

- Correct their points history;
- Request a copy of a finalized NGB 22, Report of Separation and Record of Service;
- Get current awards and decorations information;
- Make a personnel data update;
- Find out about current points;
- Choose a Reserve Component Survivor Benefit Plan;
- Request a copy of a finalized Defense Department Form 214, Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty;
- Get retired pay assistance;
- Request copies of previous enlisted performance reports or officer performance reports; or
- Sign up for TRICARE Reserve Select.

Members can stay informed about the latest vPC-GR information by creating a new account on vPC-GR and electing to receive the vPC-GR online subscription-based e-mail. To get to it, visit the ARPC Web site at <http://arpc.afrc.af.mil> and click on the vPC-GR logo. (AFRC News Service)

New procedures improve accountability in emergencies

ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga. – If a national emergency occurs, Air Force Reserve Command has improved procedures in place for keeping track of its military people and their families.

The command developed the procedures to prepare for future disasters after hurricanes devastated the Gulf Coast last year.

“Our goal is to educate each individual on the importance of timely personnel accountability after any devastating event,” said David Holly, AFRC personnel readiness operations branch chief.

Under the new procedures, commanders use a two-phase approach to account for their people. Each phase – pre and post – will be completed within 48 hours of notification to begin the accountability process.

People assigned to or living in an affected area must check in with the unit. They should check in at the first available opportunity, but no later than 48 hours after the start of the crisis. People on temporary assignment or on leave in a disaster area should report their location and status to their unit of assignment.

“Personnel accountability is a top priority for Air Force Reserve Command,” said Mr. Holly. “Our most important resources are our people and their families.”

“In the event of a disaster, we need timely accountability of our people,” he said. “Since we must always be prepared to accomplish our mission, we need to know their status and availability.”

Reporting instructions are available on the command Web site <https://wwwmil.afrc.af.mil/>. People can link to the instructions by selecting the “Hot & New Items” icon, going to the drop down menu and selecting “Personnel Accountability.” (AFRC News Service)

Gym opens earlier to serve Reservists

Starting in September, the Maxwell AFB Gym will open from 6 to 8 a.m. on Saturday and 5 to 8 a.m. on Sunday of the UTAs to accommodate 908th members. Base officials stress the early opening hours are for 908th AW members only.

Award winners feted in style

Pictured from left, Master Sgt. Stephen Kramer, Senior Airman Joel Howell, Staff Sgts. Anita Atkinson, and Kenyse Savage, and Master Sgt. Teresa Murrell settle in for a chauffeured ride to lunch – just one of the prizes and mementos presented to quarterly winners of the wing recognition program. Kramer, Howell and Savage were the 2nd quarter SNCO, Amn and NCO of the Quarter, respectively; Atkinson and Murrell, 1st quarter NCO and SNCO, respectively.



Take Note



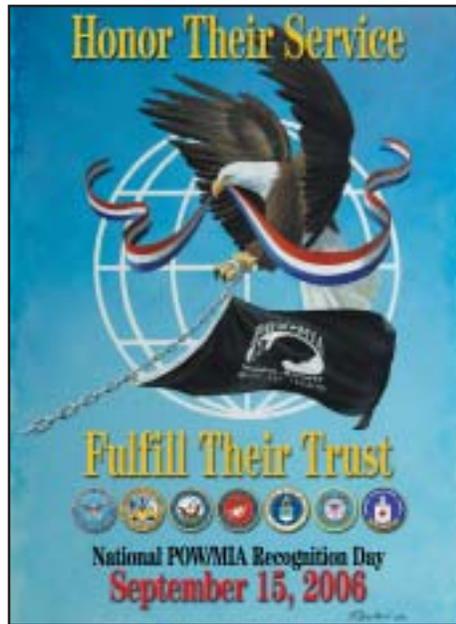
Photo by Melanie E. Rodgers

Old is new again

Above, Chief Master Sgt. Malcolm McVicar explains the history of the circled U.S. lapel insignia to Tech. Sgt. Sharee Hileman at the Air Force Enlisted Heritage Research Institute at Maxwell-Gunter Air Force Base, Ala., Aug. 8. A recent change to Air Force Instruction 36-2903 returned the circled insignia to the enlisted service dress uniform. The origin of the insignia can be traced back to 1902. The reauthorized insignia was worn by Airmen until the early 1990s when it was removed from both officer and enlisted uniforms. Airmen can return to their heritage and begin wearing the circled insignia now, but must have it on by Jan. 1. In addition, senior NCOs will no longer wear the shoulder board rank effective Oct. 1.

POWs, MIAs remembered

Right, Prisoners of war and those missing in action are remembered Sept. 15 on national POW/MIA Recognition Day. POW/MIA Recognition Day is one of the six days specified by law on which the black POW/MIA flag shall be flown over federal facilities and cemeteries, post offices and military installations.



Eleven selected for promotion to lieutenant colonel

Congratulations to the following people selected for promotion to

Lieutenant Colonel:

Mariann Carlton, AES

Susan Cheatwood, AES

Scott Fallon, CES

Peter Garland III, 357th AS

Mark Harrison, 357th AS

Marietta Johnson, ASTS

Winthrop Johnson, 908th AW

Jeffrey Starr, AES

Nancy Stephenson, 908th AW

Elliott Stoffregen III, 357th AS

Janey Worth, AES

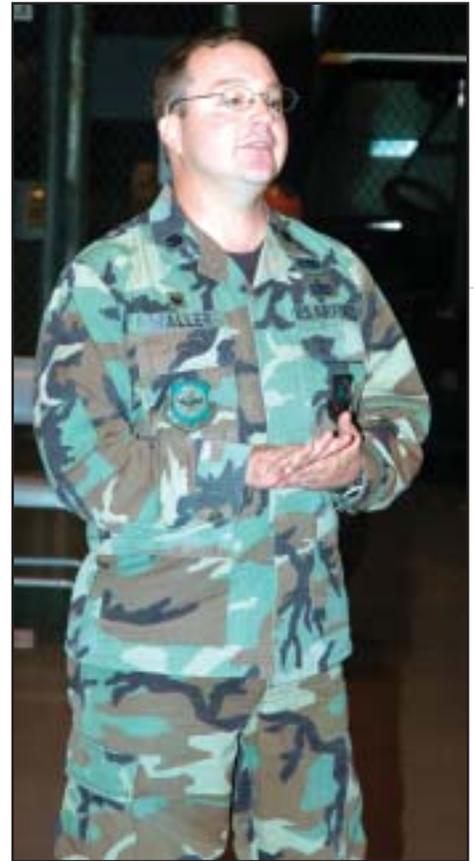


Photo by Staff Sgt. Jay Ponder

LRS gets new commander

Lt. Col. Ed Waller speaks to a group of unit members, friends and well-wishers on the occasion of his assumption of command of the 908th Logistics Readiness Squadron Aug. 6. Colonel Waller, a former longtime 908th AW member, replaced Maj. Ben Smith, who is attending Air Command and Staff College. Waller returned to Maxwell from March ARB, Calif., where he commanded the 452nd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron. Prior to that he held several positions within the 908th including maintenance officer and plans officer.

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