

**WING COMES TOGETHER FOR MEMBERS IN NEED PGS. 6-7**

# SOUTHERN FLYER



# Home Again!

**908TH DEPLOYERS RETURN TO FAMILY, FRIENDS**

# SOUTHERN FLYER



Vol. 50 Issue 05  
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## PUBLIC AFFAIRS

PA Officer: Lt. Col. Jerry Lobb  
 Editor: Mr. Gene H. Hughes  
 Writer: Tech. Sgt. Jay Ponder  
 Writer: Staff Sgt. Sandi Percival

# You are more than a number

Amid all of the force structure talk, I've heard some people wonder if they are the victims of being a faceless number to be cut, that there is nothing that sets them apart. Changes are inevitable, and we may see dramatic ones in the not-too-distant future, but think about who you are.

We look back at periods of history and hold in the highest regard those who sacrificed to preserve and protect our great nation. Where do you compare?

At the beginning of our history, men volunteered to serve in militias, rebelling against their king to create this nation and laying the foundation that would eventually become one half of the Air Reserve Component called the National Guard. Those men took great personal and financial risk, enduring legendary hardships while they served.

Most served for very short periods of time and left, causing the Continental Army to almost constantly train new recruits.

The Civil War saw massive volunteerism for a cause tangibly clear to the hearts and minds of the soldiers.

On both sides they were fighting for their homeland and their very way of life. It was easy to be inspired to join and fight for the cause for both sides.



LT. COL. KEN OSTRAT  
Ops Chief, 357th AS

We proclaim those who fought in World War II to be "The Greatest Generation," and every generation that follows owes those men and women a debt of gratitude for the stand they made against global tyranny, but our entire participation in the conflict from Pearl Harbor to Naga-

saki took only 45 months — about the same amount of time it takes to finish high school. We've been in the Middle East since 1991. In some capacity, we've put our men and women in harm's way there for 21 years. This has been the longest sustained period of foreign conflict in our country's history, and it hasn't always been popular or obvious why. It's only through the persistent commitment of a few that we have kept those who would harm us at bay.

That is where you are different from everyone who came before. We live in a society that is comparatively comfortable, even with

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the current economy. We want for very little and there is a culture of ease about us. We enjoy this despite the efforts of those who would take it away from us.

There are 300 million people living that comfortable life in America, and only around one percent of them serve as the barrier against the enemy who threatens that tranquility every day. We don't have a draft; those "one percenters" have to volunteer to step away from their comfortable life and put themselves in harm's way. They give up weekends, birthdays, time with their spouses and children, all to put themselves in the way of those who would do their nation harm.

It doesn't matter how close to the tip of the spear your job puts you. You have stood up, defied the convention of your peers and put yourself on the razor's edge. No one forced you, and no one will understand what you give up to protect them so they will never be able to properly thank you.

The important thing is that we understand price of serving. We appreciate each other, because we understand what each of us gives up to belong to our unit. Whatever changes may come, we won't lose that appreciation for the long, dedicated service you have given the Air Force, the Reserve, the wing and your nation.

We are not faceless numbers. We are much more. We will get through this time, and we will take care of each other, because we understand the true value of someone who stands up to be a member of the 908th Airlift Wing.



# Show yourself the money

By Staff Sgt. Billy Kidd  
908th FM

There is evidence our Air Force is changing and becoming more and more of a self-service branch of service everyday. One area that has not been missed by the change is finance and your pay.

As self-service members in today's military, we must make it a priority to be aware of information available to us regarding our pay, and more importantly, how that information can result in your being paid in a quick and orderly fashion.

First and foremost, make sure you can access AROWS and review your orders. Did you know that you can only turn in an order after your tour is completed? This means if the last day of the order is March 1, you cannot turn your order in for pay until March 2.

If the order is for 30 days or more, you will need to out process and make sure you submit a copy of your order to finance as a pre-certification with yours and your supervisor's signature. This will allow your military pay to be started. If an amendment is cut against the order, make sure that it is provided with your orders on file at finance.

When turning your travel vouchers in to finance, make sure you have duplicate copies of everything you turn in. Also, make sure your voucher (DD 1351-2) is the most recent version, which is dated May 2011 at the bottom. Ensure there are

## HOURS OF OPERATION:

Monday-Tuesday, 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
 Wednesday, 8 a.m. - noon  
 Thursday-Friday, 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
 UTA Saturday, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
 UTA Sunday, 12:30 - 3 p.m.

two sets of signatures at the bottom of your voucher, yours as well as the reviewers. Please provide all supporting documentation with your voucher. If it is a hard-copy voucher, you must file. If not, make sure to read that order and, if it says to use DTS, file your voucher in DTS.

If you have any issues with DTS, you can ask your unit official defense travel administrator for assistance.

Another resource you can utilize is MyPay (<https://mypay.dfas.mil/mypay.aspx>). MyPay is a great resource for updating your address, withholdings for state and federal taxes, and signing up for savings such as the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP). If you ever forget your password or get locked out of MyPay, you can contact MyPay at (888) 411-DFAS (3327) for assistance.

As always, the 908th FM office is here to assist you with any and all of the issues named here. Our goal is to arm you with a working knowledge of finance, as well as an awareness of online resources. This way, you can be your own first line of defense.

Rest assured that throughout the process, your financial office personnel are here to back you up.

## SOUTHERN FLYER

### COVER PHOTO:

Staff Sgt. Abby Helton of 25th APS rushes into the welcoming embrace of her family upon her return from deployment overseas. Helton was one of several 908th deployers returning home.



U.S. Air Force Photo/  
Lt. Col. Jerry Lobb

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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.

# Putting all the pieces together

## 908th units put AATTC lessons into practice

908th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

The effort needed to sharpen the unit's airlift mission capabilities is a never-ending process for members of the 908th Airlift Wing. The dedication to continue to maintain and improve those capabilities despite the possibility of losing that mission is a tribute to the dedication and professionalism of Alabama's only Air Force Reserve unit.

Flying a Tactical Air Control weekend is not unusual for the Airmen of the 357th Airlift Squadron, but recently, members took advantage of the added benefits of teaching, planning and flying based solely on procedures taught at Advanced Airlift Tactics Training Center (AATTC), located at Rosecrans Air National Guard Base, Saint Joseph, Mo.



Tech. Sgt. Daniel Gross works through a pre-flight checklist.



Mission support and maintenance Airmen prepare the aircraft.

It was a welcome opportunity to sharpen combat skills for new aircrew members.

The training was the creation of C-130 evaluator pilot Lt. Col. Kenneth Holston. He and instructor pilot Capt. Derek Shehee worked many hours planning the weekend. The first two days consisted of academics in the morning and a four-hour tactical flight and airdrops in the evening.

The last day was preparation and planning for a three-hour flight and airdrops where everything already covered was put into practice.

"The academics were taught by our own Instructors (pilots, navigators, engineers and loadmasters) who are former AATTC graduates," said flight engineer superintendent Chief Master Sgt. Brent Solomon. "The instruction was designed to touch on airlift combat tactics the instructors had learned at AATTC and what is presently being used in forward areas."

The weekend was more than an operational challenge. In addition to



extensive planning by several members of the operations group, it was the second straight working weekend for many members, as the wing's unit training assembly had occurred the weekend prior.

Solomon said none of the training would have been possible if it hadn't been for the support of maintenance and aerial port personnel.

"Our maintenance team worked two shifts through the weekend, providing four aircraft a day (three flyers and a spare)," he said, "and our aerial port personnel built and recovered combat offload pallets and airdrop loads. It was a total team effort."

Solomon said the weekend was another chapter in the wing's long history of being the "best of the best."

"Our Airmen continue to strive for excellence in our mission of executing tactical airlift in support of national objectives anywhere in the world ... no matter what," he said.

## COMPLIANCE COUNTDOWN:

# Prepare for the BOGI men

By Lt. Col. Troy Vonada  
Chief of Performance Planning

*"Perfection is not attainable. But if we chase perfection, we can catch excellence."*

— Vince Lombardi

Everyone looks for a checklist to help them prepare for inspections. I submit to you that checklists are not the cure. First and foremost is knowing your job ... cold! People who are viewed as competent, credible and confident should sail through any Inspector General visit.

I spent time recently with the Air Force Reserve Command IG team, attempting to redefine what virtual inspections mean. Many of them mentioned they would like to go back to the old days when units didn't get the long spin-up times and received notification that the IG team would inspect them within 72 hours.

Remember the old SAC days when the first notification received by units was when the IG team was circling overhead, calling the command post to notify they were at their base to inspect? There was much discussion about the fact that units should be ready all the time for an inspection to happen.

So how do we go about being ready all the time?

Number one, know your job and be sure you're accomplishing the full spectrum of assigned responsibilities. Read your Air Force Instructions, AFI supplements, guidance memorandums and be sure to benchmark with others in the

command in similar positions. Get to know your functional leaders at higher headquarters, be respectful of their position, and learn what their expectations are. In any event, make sure you're accomplishing everything expected of you — including what your supervisor thinks is important.

Secondly, get comfortable with Managers Internal Control Toolset (MICT). Learn how to navigate through the program and teach others. MICT is both a powerful and valuable tool in your arsenal in IG preparation. Active Duty Air Force has adopted MICT from AFRC, and now AFIA and AFMC are going to be the primary administrators for the program. Their adoption speaks to the value and utility of MICT. So, make sure you're good with it, and if not, give your self-inspection monitor or me a call. We're happy to lend a hand!

Third, have a continuity binder for every major program that has a checklist in MICT. If in doubt as to whether your program is major or not, then I would suggest preparing a binder. There are varying opinions on the importance of binders among IG team members. Some feel they are important and others don't.

In any event, I suggest creating one for all major programs and for back-up in case we have systemic issues during the IG visit.

Fourth, understand that the IG team members run inspections differently depending on level of expertise. Most use MICT checklists exclusively. Others utilize a combina-

tion of MICT checklists and AFIs, guidance memorandums, etc. Still yet, others are so familiar with their various functional areas that they'll ask "open-ended" questions to see if you can answer all of their questions through discussion.

There are various ways you may get inspected, so prepare yourself mentally for that.

Since we're having a virtual inspection, the IG team should be conducting the inspection in fewer days and with less visiting inspectors. (The IG team affectionately calls this the BOGI team, meaning "boots-on-ground inspection team.") For the virtual inspection aspect, we are responsible for uploading various documents, i.e., appointment letters, in MICT well in advance of the BOGI inspection.

For your situational awareness, the virtual inspection takes place approximately 30 days prior to the boots-on-ground inspection, which means the IG team will be conducting the virtual inspection on or about May 21-31.

Finally, with the recent force structure announcement, we've received some hard news. However, any great fighter can take a punch and keep on going, survival being the credo of the day.

Vince Lombardi also said, "It's not whether you get knocked down; it's whether you get up."

So, let's dust ourselves off, polish our programs, clean up our areas and show the inspection teams what we're made of!

# Coming Through

908th family  
closes ranks for  
fellow members

By Master Sgt. Christian Michael  
908th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

When tragedy strikes, knowing the first step to recovery can be difficult, and rebuilding a life even more so. Two Airmen from the 908th Airlift Wing recently experienced disaster firsthand and found not only the pains of loss, but the true value of Reserve family as fellow members stepped up to help them through.

## TORNADO

The clock blinked 3:50 a.m. when Senior Airman Eva Sisson woke up. Something felt wrong, but she couldn't place it. She had a test flight that morning at loadmaster technical school at Little Rock Air Force Base, Ala., and it was two hours before her alarm was supposed to go off, so she laid back down. Ten minutes later, the phone rang and her world changed.

"It's all gone. The house is gone," said her husband



The Birmingham home of Senior Airman Eva Sisson lies in ruins after being struck by a tornado.

back in Birmingham. "We're standing out here in the rain. A tornado came. It's all gone."

Just minutes before, he woke to the sound of glass breaking in his bedroom from a tornado bearing down on their home. Bolting from his bed, he ran to his 2-year-old son's room and grabbed him, before squatting in a small closet with the child in a firm bear hug.

Now standing outside in their pajamas, he and their son had just escaped death, and now looked into the darkness at what remained of their family home. He told his wife later that as the wind attempted to suck the child from his arms, it was just the "sound of destruction."

Sisson panicked, and immediately called her mother and family about arranging travel home, when her mother told her, "You'll just be another mouth to feed. Stay there and finish."

Nearing the end of loadmaster school, Sisson was a new addition to the 357th Airlift Squadron. She had transferred from active duty and inprocessed only five days with the unit before leaving for school. When word came to the 908th, help poured out, members driving to Birmingham to bring supplies, called daily and used lunch breaks to buy things for her son.

"As soon as word got out that her house got destroyed, we immediately set out to help her," said Senior Master Sgt. James Rickels, 357th AS loadmaster scheduler and the first to hear from Sisson after the tornado. "I don't know if there was any one person to help her out. Somebody in the squadron needed help, and we got to work."

Sisson not only received help from her home unit, but as she neared her final checkride, support came in from her school and fellow classmates, pushing through difficult weather on the day of her test. Not only did her instructors press to get the flight operational for her, alone, but all five other crews showed up to show their support

"This whole experience has renewed my faith in humanity," said Sisson. "The support from my unit and this wing has been amazing. I felt like everybody stood up to

help take care of my family. They put clothes on my son's back, food in his mouth and shoes on his feet. How do you thank someone for that?"

In the end, she tried anyway.

"My military family really came through for us," she said. "I would thank you all from the bottom of my heart, but for all of y'all, there is no bottom!"

## FIRE

Technical Sergeant Todd Benge was at his civilian job on the Columbus AFB, Miss., flightline, when his wife, Erinn, was home with their boys eating dinner. When she thought she heard heavy winds outside, she checked the carport and was shocked to find it engulfed in flames.

Grabbing her boys and the three family pets, they ran outside just in time to watch the roof collapse.

Four days before Christmas, Benge, an aircraft metals technologist with the 908th Maintenance Squadron, suddenly had to find a place for his entire family to stay before picking up the pieces of their lives

"I was really shaken up," said his wife, Erinn, "but really, the only thing at the moment was my children were safe. After the fact, it was: Where do we go from here?"

The fire was ruled as an electrical fire due to faulty wiring. After the fire was put out, their first goal was to recover their photographs and their firebox with their important information.

"We were able to salvage pictures, because they were in a closet by the front door ... but that was about it," said Erinn. "At that point, it was just: where do we go? And we're currently staying with my in-laws. Now we're searching for a house."

When Benge came in for the unit training assembly the following month, help poured in. Members from Benge's unit stayed in constant contact and began sending monetary donations — easier for the distance between here and his home in Columbus, Miss.

"It kind of confirms that we're not alone," said Erin.



The home of Tech. Sgt. Todd Benge was consumed in flames just a few days before Christmas.

"At times it's been a little overwhelming, and wonderful, to know that as big as the 908th is, that they can come together when tragedy hits like this. It's just wonderful."

The Benges are currently looking for a new house to move into by October, just in time to welcome the newest addition to their family.

## FAMILY

"It's important to remember that this wing is a family," said 908th Command Chief Master Sgt. Owen Duke. "Even though we may only see each other once a month, and sometimes we don't see Airmen from different squadrons, our family looks after itself."

"This is absolutely critical in our business, because you never know from one minute to the next whether you're going to be here at Maxwell for a UTA or down-range," he said. "We must support each other and our immediate family."

"Family Day is to celebrate the families and sacrifices that they make for the Airmen as we deploy in and out to different locations, and the stresses it places on relationships. Two members lost everything and the 908th family wrapped (its arms) around them.

"It's the families that make this country great, not us."

## A MOMENT WITH THE HAPLAIN

CH. (MAJ.) DAVID DERSCH

“Family” is one of the most positive words in the English language. Being part of a family is such a good thing that in addition to your biological family, others have borrowed the term to give their groups a more positive image. So you have gang members calling each other “family,” many folks have a church family and of course, there’s our 908th family.

The Saturday of the May UTA is Family Day, a time when Airmen are encouraged to take the time to honor family members who support them in their military service. Whether they include your spouse, parents, children, siblings or pets — they all deserve a big round of applause and some extra special attention.

If your family is not able to attend, take the time to make a special phone call, write a note or do something to recognize them when you get home. Take a gift or souvenir home. Do something!

Part of maintaining our Airmen’s fitness is making sure we don’t neglect, or take for granted, our families, those who should be closest to us. Families stick together, especially during tough times. Live your life and make your family a priority, so that when your Air Force career is over, they will still be there for you!

Honor your families this Family Day, and to all you family members who may be reading this, please know that you’re more important to us than the Air Force!



By Col. Hal H. Rhea  
908th ASTS Dental

Did you know that during the American Civil War, the biggest disqualification to becoming a soldier in the Union army was being diagnosed with “bad teeth?”

Still true today, as an airman, being classified in a Dental Readiness Class (DRC) of 3 or 4 means you are non-deployable — with the possibility of being sent to the Inactive Ready Reserve. By regulation, all airmen must have an annual dental exam as part of their readiness assessment.

How can you stay dentally ready?

### Stay current in DRC 1 or DRC 2

These classifications mean you have no dental defects, or minor defects, and that your dental exam is current. Dental exams are good for one year. When your dental exam expires, you are coded as DRC 4.

Do not become a DRC 4! This means your dental status is unknown. You are not deployable and you can be placed in a “no pay – no points” status until you have an exam.

If you are new to the Air Force, you will be seen in our dental clinic within 90 days of your arrival because your first dental exam must be military, as must every third exam.

For the next two years, your exam will be performed by your civilian dentist and reported on a DD form

2813. The completed form is given to your Unit Health Monitor who will route it to the 908 PES.

### Do not become or stay DRC 3

This classification means that you have a serious dental problem. Examples of such defects include but are not limited to: deep tooth cavities, abscessed teeth, serious gum disease or problematic wisdom teeth.

In this status you are not deployable until you correct your DRC 3 dental defect(s). You may still be allowed to participate for pay and points on home station only for a maximum of 12 months. During this time you will be required to report to the dental clinic at 120-day intervals to verify that you are correcting your problem.

If DRC 3 defects are not corrected by the 12 month deadline, the airman’s commander will be notified to place the member in a “no pay-no points” status with a recommendation to send him or her to the IRR.

### Have your own civilian dentist

Unlike active duty, we Reservists must pay for our own medical and dental care. Tricare dental insurance is available to all reservists and the cost is reasonable. If you have questions, call the clinic at 953-7822 during the UTA and one of our dental technicians will assist you.

## WELCOME HOME, WARFIGHTERS!



The 908th recently welcomed several of its members home after their successful completion of overseas deployments. Above: Capt. Lamar Hilton surprises his son at day care in Prattville. Lower left: Col. Brett Clark greets Hilton along with Tech. Sgts. Ian Murphy, Armen Weinrick and Robert Gregory. Family members await their loved ones’ arrival at the Montgomery airport. Clark welcomes Tech. Sgt. Dustin Barboza, Senior Airman Davey Atkins and Staff Sgt. Taurean Omorgie. Below: Clark with, from left, Master Sgt. Curtis Henderson, Tech. Sgt. Kenneth Johnson, Master Sgt. Jeffrey Holder, Staff Sgt. Christine Johnson, Tech. Sgt. Michael Smith, Senior Airman Gary Broaden, Tech. Sgt. James Beasley, Senior Airman Corey Brewster, Staff Sgt. Abby Helton, Senior Master Sgt. Andres Soler and Tech. Sgt. Frank Mitchell.



# WELCOME NEWCOMERS!

Lt Col Sherry A. Eliason, AW  
 Lt Col Mary E. Nordgulen, AW  
 Capt Christopher Powers, OG  
 1st Lt Gwendolyn F. Manuel, ASTS  
 TSgt Kembela McCrary, ASTS  
 SSgt Sandra Lloyd, 25 APS  
 SSgt Leslie K. Jordan, 25 APS  
 SrA Brett R. Brown, AMXS  
 SrA Dustin R. Shipman, MXS  
 A1C Robert I. Booker, CES  
 A1C Jonathan W. Fairchild, AMXS

A1C Jamaar C. Jackson, FSS  
 A1C Warren J. Taylor, AMXS  
 AB Jeremy N. Bennett, SFS  
 AB Ariel B. King, ASTS  
 AB Alana P. McClain, ASTS  
 AB Jylian McCoy, SFS  
 AB Stewart Thomason, FSS  
 Amn Christian N. Granger, ASTS  
 Amn Giovanni S. Lewis, AMXS  
 Amn Kandace A. Moore, ASTS  
 Amn Michael K. Turry, AES



## Gaining Altitude

Senior Master Sergeant



Sharon L. Jones  
 Keith A. Tareco

Master Sergeant



Daniel J. Gross  
 Christopher Sneed  
 Timothy B. Smith  
 Johnny R. White

Technical Sergeant



William Garrison  
 Ben A. Cecil  
 Vincent Giustina  
 Wendy J. Corbett

Staff Sergeant



Billy W. Kidd Jr.

Senior Airman



Brian E. Walters  
 Jessica Buchanan  
 John P. Stephenson

Airman



Cynthia R. Wright  
 Anthony C. Cooper

*Congratulations!*



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TO THE FAMILY OF:

## Preparing to Disembark

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 Col Camille Phillips  
 Lt Col Naomi E. Deshoreosborne  
 Lt Col Peter J. Garland III  
 Lt Col Kenneth C. Holston  
 Lt Col Stanley M. Jesionowski  
 Lt Col Donna B. Roberts  
 Lt Col Billy R. Tabor Jr.  
 CMSgt Jesse M. Scott  
 SMSgt Mark V. Williams  
 MSgt Charles Britt

MSgt Rodney T. Bush  
 MSgt Randy B. Garrett  
 MSgt Jonathan A. Gray  
 MSgt David J. McCaughtry  
 MSgt Nicholas M. Monday  
 TSgt Henry R. Milliner Jr.  
 TSgt Ronnie S. Warner

\* The next Retirement Briefing is set to take place June 2 at 9 a.m. in the MSG Conference Room, Building 903.\*

## CONGRATULATIONS CCAF GRADS!

Congratulations to the class of April 2012! The following members have graduated from the Community College of the Air Force with a Associate in Applied Science.

SMSgt. Kenneth L. Wright, ASTS "Health Care Management"  
 MSgt. Joseph D. Keen, AMXS "Aviation Maintenance Technology"  
 TSgt Karen A. Rhodes, MXG "Information Management"  
 TSgt Henry K. Rudolph, CF "Information Systems Technology"

TSgt. Tyler J. Venafro, ASTS "Health Care Management"  
 SSgt. Chad S. Braunschweig, OSF "Survival Instructor"  
 SSgt. Angela J. Burton, AES "Allied Health Sciences"  
 SSgt. Scott J. Ferraris, 357 AS "Aviation Operations"  
 SSgt. Chametaya C. McMillian, FSS "Human Resource Management"  
 Staff Sgt. Travis R. Newhart, CES "Fire Science"  
 Senior Airman Alan S. Thompson, CES "Maintenance Production Management"

## BRIEFS

### Did You Know?

Health records are the property of the United States Government, not the individual.

Maintenance of health records

at the Military Treatment Facility is required IAW AFI 41-210. Patients may request a copy of their medical records by filling out a release form located at the 908th ASTS front desk.

Do you have your original medical/dental records? If so, you need to turn them over to 908th ASTS personnel as soon as possible.

We thought you'd like to know.



*Look like a masterpiece!*



*Sing like a superstar!*

*Engage in activities for children of all ages!*

**I know. AGAIN! It's crazy.**

# 2012 FAMILY DAY

Saturday, May 5

Please, don't forget your family this time.