



THE

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Photo by Tech. Sgt. Scott T. Sturkol

Faces of Eagle Flag

Staff Sgt. Jason Venturella, 421st Combat Training Squadron, plays the role of a "National Army of Chimaera" soldier during Air Force Exercise Eagle Flag 08-1 Oct. 20 at Naval Air Engineering Station Lakehurst, N.J. The exercise is operated by the U.S. Air Force Expeditionary Center's Expeditionary Operations School and the 421st CTS where more than 400 Airmen are tested and trained in expeditionary combat support skills. For more on Eagle Flag, see Pages 20-21.

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Mobility Operations School: 'Velocity in training'

By Mr. Rudy Becker
Mobility Operations School Commandant

Imagine looking out at a flightline in a thunderstorm and witnessing a fuel spill. You yell over to your expediter who immediately calls the Maintenance Operations Center.

Within seconds, you hear the sirens and watch trucks arrive on the scene to contain the spill. Guess where you are — you are sitting in a classroom at the U.S. Air Force Expeditionary Center learning to become a maintenance production supervisor!

The Mobility Operations School is delivering award-winning training through the balanced use of technology and simulation, not only in the classroom, but also in the field and over the Web.

In 2006, our air transportation on-line training was recognized as the best in the industry, winning the Brandon Hall "Excellence in Learning" Gold Award, competing against giants like Microsoft and Intel, and the only Department of Defense agency honored with the award. Our folks have earned numerous Air Force level awards for their innovative instruction, and the MOS was recently named Air Mobility Command's nominee for the Frank Brewer Trophy for Excellence in Aerospace Education for the second year running.

The ultimate vision of our training is simple — mirror the mission environment that our Airmen will be working in as closely as possible so when they show up at the work site, in garrison or deployed, their first impression is, "I've been here before, and I'm ready!"

Velocity and readiness are the names of the game at our two geographically separated detachments, whose charter is to prepare theater and global command and control experts, shaving weeks and months of spin-up time in the process.

Detachment 1 at Hurlburt Field, Fla., is the gateway to theater air mobility operations where junior enlisted Airmen through general officers are prepared to operate the Air Mobility Division within Air and Space Operations Centers throughout the world.

Prior to deploying to the Combined Air Op-



erations Center in Southwest Asia, AMD members and the Director of Mobility Forces-Air receive realistic, hands-on, just-in-time training to ensure critical patients, supplies, personnel and fuel are delivered effectively to coalition aircraft and forces.

Detachment 2 at Scott Air Force Base, Ill., is the center for teaching global mobility operations. Det. 2 creates the "mental toolkit" planners and executors need and require in order to operate in this constantly changing environment. The Global Mobility Air and Space Operations Course prepares Airmen to operate the Tanker Airlift Control Center, AMC's global AOC, while the command and control courses ensure effective local command post execution of AMC's mobility missions. In concert, these functions ensure U.S. and coalition partners have the resources at hand to meet any contingency.

Our 34th Combat Training Squadron at Little Rock AFB, Ark., has the potential to be recognized as the host of what can be thought of as a "Mobility Red Flag" — getting aircrews and support personnel their first five missions in a simulated high threat environment so when they show up for the fight, they've already "been there."

Partnering with the Joint Readiness Training Center at Fort Polk, aircrews and contingency response teams converge from around the

world, including Germany, Great Britain, and Australia, to execute a realistic deployment into a bare base environment. Aircrews flying both air-land and airdrop missions respond to the videotaped launch of realistic ground threats as well as escape and evasion scenarios.

Maintenance and operations personnel respond to power outages, demonstrations, mortar and sniper attacks as well as small unit organized attacks while coordinating with the host nation for support.

Contingency Response Teams open and operate landing and drop zones with night vision goggles during 24-hour operations. The 34th CTS is also the center of excellence for Joint Precision Airdrop System training for mobility air forces. This capability, while still in its infancy, is, for example, being employed daily in Afghanistan to deliver pinpoint airdrop accuracy to coalition forces.

Back at Fort Dix, in addition to aircraft maintainers, we prepare operators and support personnel across the mobility spectrum — air transportation, tactics, intelligence, aircrew resource management, contingency response and communication systems. Additionally, Fort Dix is the home for the Advanced Study of Air Mobility, or ASAM, Program — one of the Air Force's newest intermediate developmental education initiatives designed to accelerate the development of future mobility leaders.

Originally the inspiration of Gen. Ron Fogleman, 189 ASAM graduates are now fulfilling his vision to bring mobility expertise to combatant commanders and cultivate a core of mobility experts to lead AMC in the future.

Fort Dix is also the center of our Web-based training effort, providing Airmen with 24-hour-a-day, seven days a week instant global access to training and delivering more than 10,000 graduates annually.

We tie it all together with our registrar's staff delivering benchmark "soup to nuts" student support and our instructor/course development team providing a world-class faculty and curriculum.

Your Mobility Operations School in action — realism and velocity in training to develop our Airmen!

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General Self pins on second star



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Scott T. Sturkol

Tech. Sgt. Ryan Holmes, U.S. Air Force Expeditionary Center Mobility Operations School, unfurls the new two-star personal flag in honor of Maj. Gen. Kip Self, USAF EC commander, during General Self's pin-on ceremony Oct. 1 in the Center's Grace Peterson Hall.

By Lt. Col. Christie L.S. Dragan
U.S. Air Force Expeditionary Center
Public Affairs

Maj. Gen. Kip L. Self, U.S. Air Force Expeditionary Center commander, pinned on his second star during a Center frocking ceremony Oct. 1 in Grace Peterson Hall.

The new major general officially became a two-star on Nov. 29.

In putting on his second star, General Self recited the oath of office and viewed the unfurling of the two-star flag that will be used at all official ceremonies where he is in attendance. In his comments at the end, General Self said, "Isn't it cool they would put a two star in charge of the U.S. Air Force Expeditionary

Center, and I think it's great that I get to be that two star."

He added to the USAF EC Airmen and staff, "I want to thank you for your support. When we go forward now for the next (couple of years), things are going to get exciting around here, and I'm glad I'll be here as that happens."

General Self became commander of the U.S. Air Force Expeditionary Center on May 23.

General Self is a 1978 graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy, earning a bachelor of science degree in psychology and management. He has held a variety of flying assignments as a helicopter and fixed wing instructor pilot. The general's staff assignments include political-military planner on the Joint Staff and Country Director in the Office of the Secretary of De-

fense. He has also served as Deputy Director of Operations at Headquarters Air Mobility Command. He has commanded at various levels, including the squadron, group and wing levels. Prior to his current assignment, the general was Commander of the 314th Airlift Wing and Installation Commander for Little Rock AFB, Ark.

General Self deployed as special operations mission commander in support of Operation Joint Endeavor, and he deployed as Director of Mobility Forces in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. During Operation Iraqi Freedom, he was Commander of a Global Mobility Task Force in Southwest Asia. General Self is a command pilot with more than 4,000 hours in UH-1, T-38, C-141B, C-17 and C-130 aircraft.

USAF EC mascot updated

Creators behind new 'Eagles' name discuss their collaboration

By Tech. Sgt. Scott T. Sturkol
U.S. Air Force Expeditionary Center
Public Affairs

Just over three months have passed since the U.S. Air Force Expeditionary Center adopted the new name, the "Eagles."

Most recently, the framework for the logo for the "Eagles" moniker has changed. Previously, it stated "Vision, Readiness, Victory" at the base of the artwork. Now, it reads, "Airpower ... from the ground up."

The new slogan made its debut during the USAF EC briefing at the Airlift Tanker Association Convention in Nashville, Tenn., in October. Maj. Gen. Kip Self, Center commander, presented it to several hundred people who were on hand for the Center's ATA briefing.

The designers and collaborators who presented the "Eagles" idea, the Center's very own Master Sgt. Michael Harris, Tech. Sgt. Charles Glunt and Mr. Bill Berks, say they were happy to give the Center a new kind of identity.

"In an Air Force that very few know what it is that the Expeditionary Center actually does, it gives us an identity that can speak to our mission," Sergeant Harris said.

Sergeant Glunt added, "It is truly a privilege, and I may never know the overall impact it will have."

For Mr. Berks, a fan of the National Football League's Philadelphia Eagles, the name was a "no-brainer." He said the final product also meets up with what his vision was and fits the unique mission of the USAF EC.

"I like it," Mr. Berks said. "The logo has incorporated a symbol of our country, acknowledged the local environment and conceptualized the expeditionary concept throughout the logo and mascot."

In the development process, Sergeant Harris designed a logo which he thought could be a starting point. Sergeant Glunt and Mr. Berks turned in a submission as well. The final product ended up being a culmination of all of their ideas.

"I was just having fun with it and never thought the concept would have been accepted," Sergeant Glunt said. "It was great to be a part of the effort."

When the initial design and name was unveiled during a commander's call in September, General Self recognized all three of the men for



Mascot designed by Master Sgt. Michael Harris, Tech. Sgt. Charles Glunt and Mr. Bill Berks

their efforts and contributions with a commander's coin.

The newest version of the Center logo appears throughout the Center and on many official

documents with a global reach such as the World Wide Web. The logo is also prominently displayed in each edition of *The Expeditionary Airman*.

Mobility commander highlights AMC wartime successes, challenges

By Roger Drinnon
Air Mobility Command Public Affairs

SCOTT AIR FORCE BASE, Ill. -- Gen. Arthur Lichte underscored AMC's wartime challenges, as he praised the accomplishments of mobility warriors across the command, during the Airlift Tanker Association's 39th annual convention in Nashville, Tenn., Oct 25-28.

The commander of AMC emphasized how the command's warfighting roles and capabilities directly contribute to the Global War On Terrorism.

"We're engaging in the fight right now," said General Lichte. "We have Airmen who are dropping people behind enemy lines. We're saving lives with our aeromedical evacuation mission. We have tankers over hostile territory," he continued. "We're getting cargo to the right place at the right time, even to the last tactical mile. We're doing this every single day. This command is always in motion and firmly in the fight."

General Lichte highlighted the air refueling fleet's contribution to the GWOT — more than a billion gallons of fuel passed by AMC tankers since Sept. 11, 2001.

"You'd have to go to Niagara Falls in the summertime, when the water is running the hardest, and watch (the waterfall) for 26 minutes to visualize the amount of fuel passed since 9-11," he said.

He also expressed the command's commitment to taking care of Airmen and members of other service branches, as all serve in dangerous environments with the constant threat of Improvised Explosive Devices.

"We're delivering about six (Mine Resistant Ambush Protected) vehicles to the field each day, and that's saving lives," said General Lichte.

He noted airlift's role in risk avoidance as another significant contribution amid a hostile wartime environment.

"We are using organic and commercial airlift to get convoys off the road, and that's saving lives," said General Lichte. "For the month of September alone, we kept 12,000 people and almost 5,000 trucks off the roads and away from the threat of IEDs and other attacks — that's the way to save lives."

The general said Aeromedical Evacuations also demonstrate AMC's commitment to caring for injured service members.

"It took 10 days to get wounded patients home from Operation Desert Storm — we had special routes and dedicated aircraft," General



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Scott T. Sturkol

Gen. Arthur J. Lichte, Air Mobility Command commander, gives his presentation to nearly 4,000 Airmen and guests at the Airlift Tanker Association Convention in Nashville, Tenn., Oct. 27. General Lichte gave the final presentation of the convention highlighting successes and the future of air mobility warriors around the world.

Lichte said. "Since Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom, any aircraft we fly can do AE (missions). It now takes about three days to get injured people back to the United States," he continued. "The (618th Tanker Airlift Control Center) finds the best mission to get them back, and we grab a critical care team and marry them up — it's a tremendous improvement and it's saving lives."

The air mobility commander said modernization of the aging mobility fleet will be key to sustaining the command's combat effectiveness. He said critical programs include the acquisition of the KC-X next-generation tanker as well as modernization and extension programs for existing airframes.

"Our aircraft are getting old and are wearing out," said General Lichte. "We are at a critical time in the command, and we need to get on

with modernization. Our equipment is tired, but our people are not. I want to ensure we have (modernized equipment) for our Airmen as they bring mission success."

The general summarized AMC's overall wartime efforts as well-aligned with the Air Force's goals and objectives.

"We're fighting and winning the war on terror and planning for the next (conflict)," said General Lichte. "We're taking care of our Airmen and their families, and we're doing everything we can to recapitalize and modernize our aircraft — AMC is out leading the fleet."

The Airlift Tanker Association is a non-profit professional organization and a forum for people interested in improving America's air mobility forces. Its members include Airmen of the Total Force, civilian employees and interested citizens.

Chief McKinley updates Airmen on AF priorities

By Tech. Sgt. Scott T. Sturkol
U.S. Air Force Expeditionary Center Public Affairs

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force Rodney J. McKinley reaffirmed the Air Force's three top priorities as winning the war on terrorism, developing and caring for Airmen and their families, and recapitalization and modernization during a briefing for attendees at the 2007 Airlift Tanker Association Convention here Oct. 26.

The Air Force's top enlisted Airman then spelled out where the service is now and what's being done for the future.

Regarding the war on terrorism, Chief McKinley said he is reminded each day of the dedication Airmen put forth in the fight.

"Every day, the first e-mail I read is about the (Air Force) casualties of the day," Chief McKinley said. "It's not a pleasant way to start the day, but it's a reminder that we truly are at war. Airmen are in the fight."

The chief said he's also reminded each day of the sacrifices American servicemembers makes in the war on terrorism.

"Our office at the Pentagon has a view of Arlington Cemetery," he said. "Nearly every day someone is buried in Arlington Cemetery. This reminds me of the sacrifices of our veterans and servicemembers. So if anyone has questions about whether or not we're really involved in a war right now, we are involved in war."

Chief McKinley said he's thankful to each and every Airman for what he or she does in fighting the war, and also thankful for the support of families.

"I think about what Airmen do for our country, and I remember their families," the chief said. "I know about the number of times Airmen deploy, and what their family goes through. Airmen are on my mind when I testify to Congress, when I talk to Gen. (T. Michael) Moseley (Air Force chief of staff) and Secretary (of the Air Force Michael W.) Wynn."

Since taking his current post, Chief McKinley said the Air Force has taken many steps forward to improve Airman development. The quality of today's Airman starts right in the recruiting office, he said. "We have fewer recruiters than any other branch of service," Chief McKinley said. "Our recruiters are doing a fantastic job meeting our goals to recruit the right amount of people."

Once new recruits make it to basic training, the chief said they get top-notch training that gets better as time goes on. He said trainees currently experience six and a half weeks of training, but by October 2008, basic training time will extend to eight and a half weeks. He added that during the recent tri-ennial BMT review, the group asked for one additional block of instruction.

"We should have one block in there where we teach the rank structure from each of the other services," Chief McKinley said. "This would help start, from the beginning, an ability to provide new Airmen some rank recognition to facilitate interaction with the other services." Updates and goals are also being looked at in all levels of professional military education. For instance, the chief referred to an effort in closing the gap between in-residence attendance at Airman Leadership School and the NCO Academy.

"Right now, the average time for attending ALS is four and a half years," Chief McKinley said. "The average time for attending the NCO Academy is 14 and a half years. I would like to see that gap where we start going to the NCO Academy at around the 10- or 11-year mark."



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Scott T. Sturkol
Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force Rodney J. McKinley addresses Airmen during the Airlift Tanker Association Convention Oct. 26 in Nashville, Tenn.

Chief McKinley said the Air Force is looking at having more senior NCOs attend the Senior NCO Academy as master sergeants.

"Right now the average time to attend the Senior NCO Academy is 19 years in service," Chief McKinley said. "That may be a little late. Our Airmen attending the Academy should be master sergeants because the training given at the academy will benefit them more at this earlier time in their careers. Senior NCO Academy should be done before Airmen sew-on senior master sergeant."

Chief McKinley talked extensively about the importance of Airmen's families and the impact families have on decisions from retainability to deployments.

"When we talk about developing Airmen and taking care of their families, we can't forget the family," Chief McKinley

said. "We have Airmen who deploy for long periods of time. They go time and time again, and the family is left behind. We need to make sure when our Airmen deploy that we stay in touch with the family and keep them a part of our military community."

During his time with the Airmen, Chief McKinley highlighted the fact that the average age of the Air Force air fleet is 24 years. He compared it to a person driving a 24-year-old car and all the challenges a person would have maintaining an older car.

"We would not think about driving cars that old because cars that old have corrosion problems, spare parts are difficult to find and the car is harder and more expensive to maintain," Chief McKinley said. "Well, that's essentially the same issue we have with our aircraft."

Chief McKinley said despite aircraft age challenges, Airmen are making the difference. "In the last 10 years, maintenance on aircraft has gone up 87 percent. However, last year was the safest flying year in the history of our Air Force. That's a direct testament to the dedication and professionalism of our Airmen."

The chief credits maintainers, aircrew and Airmen around the world for the safe flying year success and that as force shaping and other initiatives help the Air Force "pay the bills," strong leadership will play a vital role.

"If people ask me to pinpoint one thing, I would say the number one concern of the enlisted force is the downsizing of the Air Force," Chief McKinley said.

With continued downsizing, Chief McKinley said Airmen in leadership positions need to look at this as a leadership challenge. He said it's not about doing more with less — it's about doing less with less.

"There's a lot on our plate; that's a leadership challenge," Chief McKinley said. "What is going to get us where we're going is strong leadership. So you, as Airmen, have to be engaged. We can't do business the way we've always done business. We are going to have less people, and we've got to find ways of doing less things."

Staying informed, thinking lean and working hard to improve the Air Force will help Airmen build a better Air Force for the future, Chief McKinley said. He noted that high quality, smart Airmen will ultimately carry the day.

"You should be very, very proud of yourself for the incredible job you're doing," Chief McKinley said. "You're doing outstanding work and we're all very proud of you."

Eagles demonstrate capabilities during ATA convention



Maj. Gen. Kip Self, U.S. Air Force Expeditionary Center commander, begins the USAF EC briefing during the 2007 Airlift Tanker Association Convention Oct. 27 in Nashville, Tenn. (Inset photo) Tech. Sgt. Kendrick Ross, Mobility Operations School and USAF EC coordinator for ATA, hands out tri-fold brochures about the Center to convention attendees.

Photos by Tech. Sgt. Scott T. Sturkol



The ATA convention display for the USAF EC featured all four areas of the Center — the resources directorate, Expeditionary Operations School, Mobility Operations School and Concepts Demonstration Program.

Eagle Flag Joint Ops



An Army Blackhawk helicopter carries off cargo as part of operations for the exercise.



Airmen from the 818th Contingency Response Group, McGuire Air Force Base, N.J., practice exiting the Blackhawk.



An 818th CRG member drives an all-terrain vehicle to a loading area to be carried to Lakehurst by the Blackhawk helicopter.



Photos by Tech. Sgt. Scott T. Sturkol

A U.S. Army Blackhawk helicopter from the New Jersey Army National Guard's Alpha Company, 1st/150th Assault Helicopter Battalion stationed at both Trenton and Lakehurst, prepares to land during a scenario for Air Force Exercise Eagle Flag 08-1 at Coyle Field in South Jersey Oct. 17. The helicopter events were part of operations with the 818th Contingency Response Group from McGuire Air Force Base, N.J., which was deploying to Naval Air Engineering Station Lakehurst for Eagle Flag.

'Candy Bomber' learns more about Ravens at ATA



Retired Col. Gail Halvorson, also known as the "Candy Bomber" during his role in the Berlin Airlift just after World War II, participates in a Raven demonstration with Master Sgt. Scott Pepper and Staff Sgt. Brian Arrington of the U.S. Air Force Expeditionary Center's 421st Combat Training Squadron during the 2007 Airlift Tanker Association Convention in Nashville, Tenn., Oct. 27. Sergeants Pepper and Arrington, as well as other 421st CTS Airmen, held Raven demonstrations throughout the convention.

Courtesy photos



Sergeants Pepper and Arrington stop for a photo with Colonel Halvorson following the demonstration.

Air National Guard's first CRG unit trains with USAF EC

By Tech. Sgt. Scott T. Sturkol
U.S. Air Force Expeditionary Center
Public Affairs

Nearly half of the Airmen assigned to the nation's first Air National Guard contingency response group unit attended 22 days of training here in the Contingency Response Formal Training Basic Course 08-1.

Fifty-six Airmen from the 115-person 123rd Contingency Response Group of the Kentucky Air National Guard at Louisville completed the comprehensive, four-module course covering all the phases of CRG operations to include subjects such as air base assessment, initial airfield operations and force protection and Alaskan shelter construction. The course is taught by the U.S. Air Force Expeditionary Center's Mobility Operations School.

The 22-day stay included 10 days as students in the Advanced Contingency Skills Training Course, taught by the Center's Expeditionary Operations School, where they learn convoy operations, military operations in urban terrain, combat patrolling and tactics and many related subjects.

"The training they received is designed to provide newly-assigned Airmen to contingency response wings, groups and airlift control flights with a firm understanding of the 'contingency response' mission," said Lt. Col. Richard Elkins, course director.

"The course prepares them for rapid deployment and equips them with the basic expeditionary skills needed to function across the full spectrum of military operations and in a wide variety of bed down and operating environments," he said.

Capt. Ash Groves, 123rd CRG maintenance officer, said the course gave him the exposure he needed to learn the "many facets of expeditionary operations."

"Many of the skills learned will take time for us to become proficient at, however, with the initial ground work accomplished, we can continue to build on our capability (as a unit)," Captain Groves said.

The establishment of the mission and the directive to form 123rd CRG was established just over one year ago on Nov. 28, 2006, in Louisville. The unit formally activates on April 1, 2008. The Airmen assigned to this unit say the training is needed and has definitely helped build on the knowledge of the mission they are tasked to do.

"We are expected to be self-sufficient when we hit the ground and capable of operating in nearly any environment," said Capt. Gregory Shanding, 123rd CRG civil engineer officer. "In the training, I learned a lot about what the other CRG functions will focus on as we together accomplish our mission. I also received an excellent 'big picture' perspective on how the CRG fits into how the Air Force fights."

Tech. Sgt. Mike Skeens, air transportation craftsman for the 123rd, added, "We have to be able to go anywhere in the world in a matter of hours. Most Airmen have days, weeks or even months to do the same. The training reiterated the fact that you have to be prepared at all times for contingencies anywhere, anytime."



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Scott T. Sturkol

Students from the 123rd Contingency Response Group, Kentucky Air National Guard at Louisville, receive a briefing by Master Sgt. John Brooks, Mobility Operations School, on night operations during training Nov. 15.

For Staff Sgt. Thomas Fuchs, the training built on skills he's learned as a 123rd CRG security forces troop.

"Being security forces, this was great refresher training, and the CRG classes were very informative," he said. "When you deploy with a CRG, everyone needs to have knowledge of other career fields in the unit, and this training helped me understand that."

According to an Air Force Print News story written when the unit was formed, the Airmen in the 123rd CRG represent more than 400 years of experience and have experienced response missions in Afghanistan and Iraq combat missions and in humanitarian response missions such as Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

The 123rd students who took the CR FTU training also say they know being in a CRG is unique and requires specialized training.

"We could hear about our deployments just days before we have to leave," said Senior Airman Ryan McNary, 123rd CRG load planner. "We have to be ready at a moment's notice and always be current on our training."

Staff Sgt. Tyler Marks, also a 123rd CRG load planner, compared the type of effort it takes for a CRG to deploy with the normal process.

"Normally when Airmen deploy, they pack bags with gear and clothing to perform a duty at a down-range base," Sergeant Marks said. "With a CRG, they pack an entire unit, load it on to aircraft and go open a base that is nothing more than a deserted airstrip when they arrive. For us to be able to do this, training is everything."

Lt. Col. Warren Hurst, 123rd CRG commander, said the ultimate goal is for his CRG to be among the best, and the Center's CR FTU training helps accomplish that goal.

"Kentucky has selected our most experienced and motivated people for our CRG," Colonel Hurst said. "We have a unique opportunity to establish a corporate culture that sets a high standard of excellence."

Colonel Hurst added, "We're very excited about the CRG mission and look forward to increasing our working relationship with the active duty CRGs. The Expeditionary Center's FTU provided an outstanding and standardized starting point for us to do just that."

Chaplain assistant chiefs evaluate pre-deployment training

By Tech. Sgt. Scott T. Sturkol
U.S. Air Force Expeditionary Center
Public Affairs

Enlisted leaders in the Air Force's chaplain assistant career field made a special visit to the U.S. Air Force Expeditionary Center in early November to talk with chaplains and chaplain assistant students in the Advanced Contingency Skills Training Course and to observe the course.

The visit brought together Chief Master Sgt. Chuck Johnson, the Air Force chaplain assistant career field manager, and command-level functional chiefs including Chief Master Sgts. Russ Geyer from Air Mobility Command, Scott Turner from Air Education and Training Command, and Geoffrey Preudhomme from Air Combat Command.

"We came here with one of our goals being to evaluate the curriculum and figure out what skill sets they're provided (during ACST)," Chief Johnson said. "Additionally, I'm going to the deployed areas and while there, I'm going to look and see if there are any gaps in our training that we need to fill. Essentially, this is all a part of that evaluation process."

The chaplain assistant career field is one of three career fields Air Force-wide that sends students to the center's ACST course — the other two being public affairs and judge advocate career fields. During ACST, students receive specific pre-deployment training to include convoy operations, military operations in urban terrain, combat first aid and more.

"This is one of our two primary locations where we give our chaplains and chaplain assistants advance readiness training prior to a deployment," Chief Johnson said. "This is where they learn the skills they need to know to go and survive and operate in the deployed environment."

Chief Geyer said he wanted to get his colleagues together to show what AMC and the U.S. Air Force Expeditionary Center offers for pre-deployment training.

"All of us, from our positions, have the need to send our warriors off to the field to fight and serve in the war," Chief Geyer said. "For all of us, it's important to know what the capabilities are that exist out there. We're not lone rangers, so I wanted my colleagues to know what capabilities Air Mobility Command can provide to their troops as they deploy their people. That's what I really wanted from this visit — to showcase what we do, because I think we do it right here for Air Mobility Command."

ACC holds similar expeditionary readiness training at Creech Air Force Base, Nev., Chief Preudhomme said.

"The course is primarily a security forces



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Scott T. Sturkol

Students in Advanced Contingency Skills Training Course 08-2 participate in a patrolling and tactics class on a range on Fort Dix Dec. 4.

course and the chaplain cadre are the only additional cadre in that course," Chief Preudhomme said. "They serve two roles — one to provide a chapel relationship with the school and a staff at that location, but also to provide training for our folks coming through in preparation for deployment."

In ACST, the added benefit for the Air Force is the relationship building that takes place between chaplains and chaplain assistants and students from other career fields. At Creech, for example, Chief Preudhomme said chaplains and chaplain assistants get to build a relationship with security forces.

"They can go back to the wings, and that chaplain or chaplain assistant could be the unit chaplain team for security forces," Chief Preudhomme said. "Building the relationship stateside only helps with a better relationship with security forces in the deployed environment, because they are already connected."

Chief Johnson noted that all chaplain assistants, whether it's in the ACST course or the expeditionary readiness training at Creech, will receive training before they leave for deployment.

"There are places in the deployed areas where we feel our people need advanced training," Chief Johnson said. "So, as the taskings come down, the line remarks basically indicate that they have to go to one of the two courses. We either send them here to attend this course, which I've been very impressed with, or, they go to the one at Creech that ACC operates. But,

everybody in the entire Air Force Chaplain Service who needs to deploy to the majority of locations we're at will come through one of these two courses regardless of command."

ACST, in its current form, just finished its first full academic year. Chief Turner said AETC has taken notice to the capabilities the course brings to its students.

"This is going to help me when I get out to the field and get asked, 'why do I have to go?'" Chief Turner said. "Since we (AETC) do the technical training and get Airmen spun up in their primary career fields, this is what will actually help them prepare for their deployments. It's helpful for our people to know the right things to do before they go down range. I'll be able to better tell this story as I go to the different AETC bases."

Chief Preudhomme added that building the pre-deployment training piece for the chaplain and chaplain assistant career fields is not an easy task, but through combined efforts and further evaluation he believes the entire career field will benefit.

"I have a follow-on tasking to review the courses (at Creech) and see what the requirements are and then see what we need to add," Chief Preudhomme said. "That will be validated by Chief Johnson going to the deployed area of responsibility and bringing that other piece back. From there, we all will work together in getting it sorted out and improving our capabilities in preparing our chapel Airmen for future deployments."

Retired loadmaster recalls 60 years of airlift history

By Tech. Sgt. Scott T. Sturkol
U.S. Air Force Expeditionary Center
Public Affairs

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — With 30 years of Air Force experience and another 13 as a loadmaster for the aerospace industry, retired Chief Master Sgt. Bill Cannon presented a historical perspective of more than 60 years of airlift and tanker history at the 2007 Airlift/Tanker Association Convention Oct. 27.

Chief Cannon's presentation, "Sixty-plus Years of Airlift and Tanker Legacies," covered the history of more than a dozen airlift aircraft — from the C-46 Curtiss Commando of World War II to the C-17 Globemaster III of today. He also highlighted early air refueling accomplishments with aircraft such as the C-2 "Question Mark" and the KC-135 Stratotanker. Mostly, Chief Cannon focused on his experience with airlift.

The chief, who retired in 1982, worked as a loadmaster on the C-54 Skymaster, C-124 Globemaster II, C-130 Hercules and C-141 Starlifter during his Air Force career. He reflected on the importance and growth of early airlift aircraft.

"C-54s, C-46s and C-47s (Skytrain), for instance, really carried the Berlin Airlift," Chief Cannon said. "This was an airlift where two and a half million tons of cargo was carried to aid the people in East Berlin. It was a great effort."

He added how the U.S. military looked to improve airlift capability during World War II.

"Cargo was getting bigger at that time — especially between 1941 and 1945," Chief Cannon said. "As they experimented, there was a thought to sling cargo underneath aircraft with cables and move it that way. They tried it at the proving grounds and found that it wasn't very feasible to hang a tank, for instance. But, they were looking for ways to do things."

The chief said cargo was getting bigger and the airplanes weren't, so the aerospace industry and the military worked together to design something bigger. Enter the C-74 Globemaster. "When they designed planes back then, they also had to be able to be flown commercially so the C-74 was designed to fly commercial as well as carry passengers," Chief Cannon said. "Pan Am (Airlines) ordered 26 of them. The airplane had two cockpits originally on the very top of the aircraft. It was a big, strong plane."

Those early airlift planes graduated into newer models to greet a growing airlift mission



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Scott T. Sturkol

Retired Chief Master Sgt. Bill Cannon, a former loadmaster on the C-54 Skymaster, C-124 Globemaster II, C-130 Hercules and C-141 Starlifter and a key contributor to the building of the C-17 Globemaster III, gives his presentation, entitled "60-plus Years of Airlift and Tanker Legacies," during the 2007 Airlift Tanker Association Convention Oct. 27 in Nashville, Tenn. Chief Cannon is a past president of the ATA and has more than 43 years experience as a loadmaster.

worldwide, the chief said. That's when the C-124 became the second Globemaster and a plane Chief Cannon said he flew on for many years.

"Back in the day, each command had their own cargo airplanes," Chief Cannon said. "Strategic Air Command had four squadrons of C-124s. I was in one of those squadrons myself for quite a long time."

Chief Cannon said the C-124 had loading ramps in the front of the plane that were ideal for loading cargo, and the front doors opened like a clam shell.

"The ramps were steep — at a 17-degree angle with a 30-percent slope," he said. "You could back vehicles in with cargo, and you could load in passengers and go. It just took them a little bit of time. The plane was also good at carrying missiles."

The C-124 was also used for airdrops, Chief Cannon said. The way it operated was much different from aircraft of today, but the cargo was much the same.

"We could airdrop paratroopers, up to 180 of them, and cargo," Chief Cannon said. "In the back of the plane, the underneath of the airplane had elevator doors that opened up, and we

could drop our cargo out, or paratroopers could jump out. We used the A-22 airdrop containers for cargo — the same ones that are being air dropped in Iraq right now. They are basically the same container."

In some cases, airdrops didn't go so well with the C-124.

"We airdropped a crate of breakfast cereal, and as it went out through the elevator well it busted open," Chief Cannon said. "The whole inside of the plane was filled with cereal."

Improvements in design and capability led to the C-130 — a plane still in use today. Chief Cannon said he learned about the aircraft's capabilities while serving in Vietnam.

"An airplane like the C-130 is fast enough and can do the job," Chief Cannon said. "A lot of thought was put into it. The person who designed it wanted to be able to load it up like a truck — like a truck bed with an airframe. In Vietnam, we had a quite a few squadrons of C-130s. It did a great job."

The chief said the C-130 is also a good airdrop aircraft. In Vietnam, he said the use of the Low Altitude Parachute Extraction System or

Loadmaster, from Page 12

LAPES was popular.

"We used the LAPES method at quite a few places," Chief Cannon said. "I remember re-supplying a refugee camp, and we couldn't land on the runway because it was covered with water, and the camp was being overrun. The only way we could get in there was through this LAPES airdrop system. We would fly one drop in, drop, go back and pick up another one or two platforms, and then we'd drop again."

As for personally flying on the C-141, Chief Cannon said it was a versatile airplane.

"It was a good airdrop plane," Chief Cannon said. "The rollerized system allowed it to airdrop things up to 72 feet long. Paratroopers liked it for dropping. Overall, everything on the 141 'downstairs,' as we called it, was good."

After retiring from the Air Force, Chief Cannon joined programs to work on improving the C-130 and building the C-17. As for the C-17 program, he says that was one of the highlights of his career.

"Our crew would go out of the gate, take a look at the C-17 and (see) how it grew," Chief Cannon said. "We'd see how it was doing, and we'd say, 'Hey there's an engine on it now,' and 'There are wings on it now.' It was a lot of fun to see this airplane grow over a three-year period. It turned out to be a great airplane."

On the subject of air refueling and tankers, the chief covered some of that history as well. He discussed the KB-29 and KB-50 aerial tankers. He also talked of the KC-97 Stratotanker.

"The KC-97s were also a conversion from the C-97, a civilian plane," Chief Cannon said. "The KC-97s did a good job for a long, long time. They couldn't go too fast, but they could carry cargo at the same time and were great for both airlift and refueling missions."

Chief Cannon also talked about the KC-135 Stratotanker and the KC-10 Extender. He spoke of how both have sustained air refueling for more than 50 years.

"These planes have refueled everything from the F-101 Voodoo to the B-2," Chief Cannon said. "They've done great things all over the world."

Chief Cannon completed his presentation by reciting a verse from the Airman's Creed, adding, "It's a good reminder to all Airmen of the sacrifices made by members of the Air Force airlift and tanker community."

"I am an American Airman," he said. "My mission is to fly, fight and win. I am faithful to the proud heritage, a tradition of honor and a legacy of valor."



Air Force archive photos

During his briefing, Chief Cannon talked extensively about the airlift capabilities of the C-124 (top), C-17 (below left) and the C-130 (below right).



Aviation resource Airmen train for future success

By Tech. Sgt. Scott T. Sturkol
U.S. Air Force Expeditionary Center Public Affairs

Known amongst each other as “one-charlies,” Airmen in the Air Force’s aviation resource management career field can get advanced training through a pair of courses in the U.S. Air Force Expeditionary Center’s Mobility Operations School at Fort Dix, N.J.

The Host Aviation Resource Management and the Squadron Aviation Resource Management courses provide advanced training in not only operating the Air Force Aviation Resource Management System Database but also build experience in areas crucial to the Air Force’s flight operations.

“The HARM course is mainly responsible for the overall operation of the ARMS database,” said Tech. Sgt. Jennifer Mastan, HARM course director. “Responsibilities of Airmen working in this type of office ensure, for example, that aircrew members meet requirements for incentive pay and validate pay with the local finance office.”

Overall, the course provides supplemental training to the base-level “one charlie” functional manager’s continuation training program, Sergeant Mastan said. “One Charlie” is short for the first two digits in the Air Force specialty designator of 1C0X2 for aviation resource management. In both courses, the “one Charlie” students are required to have a five-skill level (journeyman) for six months.

Sergeant Mastan explained the basics for the HARM course.

“This course is designed for the students to gain a better understanding of their HARM duties through lectures, guided discussions, task performance and hands-on computer training,” said Sergeant Mastan, who was the Air Force’s ARM Instructor of the Year for 2006. She added the HARM course instructs in “high impact” areas such as resource management, system management, flight time, ARMS reports and training management.

“Some of the tasks performed in this course include input and audit of flight time, cutting an aeronautical order and a flight record folder audit,” Sergeant Mastan said. “This is work that not only tests them on their job but gives them something that they can take back and make their fellow Airmen better.”

Similar in style is the SARM course, said Staff Sgt. Khadejah Mitchell, course director.

“In this course, classes are designed to provide instruction in areas such as scheduling, resource management, system management, training management, standards and evaluations, ARMS reports, flight time and mobility and deployments,” Sergeant Mitchell said. “The course really helps, I believe, each student learn and apply the proper application of Air Force instructions to enhance job knowledge. It’s not an easy course by any means.”

Sergeant Mitchell added that like HARM, the SARM course has a “comprehensive curriculum” that will ultimately aid the “one-charlies” working at home station or deployed.

“These courses concentrate on areas and tasks difficult to teach in the normal work environment,” Sergeant Mitchell said.

Both Sergeants Mastan and Mitchell support each other in teaching the courses. Sergeant Mitchell has been teaching the SARM course since September 2005. Sergeant Mastan has taught her course for the Mobility Operations School September 2006. Both say they enjoy the opportunity and hope they are making a difference in the aviation resource management business.

“I’ve always enjoyed the interaction with other ‘one charlies’ and to be able to share my knowledge and experience with them,” Sergeant Mastan said. “I learn so much about our career field and what’s actually going on in the field from our students. Even though we’re the instructors, we also learn something new from our students in every class.”



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Scott T. Sturkol
Staff Sgt. Khadejah Mitchell and Tech. Sgt. Jennifer Mastan, both instructors for the U.S. Air Force Expeditionary Center's Mobility Operations School, begin a new class in September.

Sergeant Mitchell said, “I always want our students to have a greater understanding of the standards and be able to take that knowledge back to their home stations and use it. That simply benefits everyone involved.”

Annually, approximately 108 Airmen complete the HARM and SARM courses, Sergeant Mastan said. Their training impact, however, affects thousands of Airmen.

“You’re talking about support for flight operations and scheduling Air Force-wide,” Sergeant Mastan said. “Those 100-plus Airmen we train impact our Air Force across the board.”

The USAF EC’s Mobility Operations School offers 53 in-residence and 11 Web-based training courses with more in development. The school covers topics in operations, transportation, maintenance, aircrew resource management and command and control to name a few. Besides Fort Dix, the MOS also has operating detachments at Hurlburt Field, Fla., Little Rock Air Force Base, Ark., Scott AFB, Ill., Fort Leavenworth, Kan., and Fort Polk, La.

Expeditionary Center courses build combat-ready 'first responders'

By Tech. Sgt. Scott T. Sturkol
U.S. Air Force Expeditionary Center
Public Affairs

Airmen assigned to contingency response groups and similar units have a pair of courses at the U.S. Air Force Expeditionary Center here to build their skills for the combat environment.

The Contingency Response Formal Training Unit Basic Course and the CR FTU Advanced Course are taught mainly by the Center's Mobility Operations School but join with the Expeditionary Operations School for one module in each of the courses. They are designed to provide Airmen newly assigned to contingency response wings, groups and airlift control flights with a firm understanding of the "contingency response" mission," said Lt. Col. Richard Elkins, course director for both courses.

The target audience is broad, Colonel Elkins said. It includes all ranks from airman basic through colonel from more than 35 different Air Force specialties. They include Airmen from Air Mobility Command, Pacific Air Forces Command, U.S. Air Forces in Europe Command and Air Reserve Command.

"These courses prepare them for rapid deployment and equip them with the basic expeditionary skills needed to function across the full spectrum of military operations and in a wide variety of bed down and operating environments," Colonel Elkins said.

Both courses last 22 days each, are built in four modules and run simultaneously, said Master Sgt. David Oliver, instructor for the courses. The first of the modules is prerequisite Web-based training, and the second is contingency response academics. Students begin their 22 days of in-resident training on the second module.

"This includes 46 hours of instruction ranging in subjects from CRG fundamentals, logistics and command relationships to air base assessment and operations in a joint and combined environment," Sergeant Oliver said. "Our instructors are deployment-tested and experienced CR Airmen who have been in the field and can provide that real-life experience. Relaying experiences is especially beneficial to Airmen new to the CRG attending the courses."

The third module for the courses involves 10 days of training in the Advanced Contingency Skills Training Course taught by EOS and its 421st Combat Training Squadron. In this block



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Scott T. Sturkol

Tech. Sgt. James Caywood, an instructor from the U.S. Air Force Expeditionary Center's Mobility Operations School, teaches a class on night vision operations using night vision goggles to students in both the Air Force Contingency Response Group Formal Training Unit Basic and Advanced Course 08-1 Nov. 15.

of training, contingency response Airmen receive advanced training in combat patrolling and tactics, convoy operations, troop leading and urban tactics.

"ACST gives our students that combat skills training they'll need when they hit the ground in deployed environments," Sergeant Oliver said.

In the fourth and final module of the CR FTU courses, students get CR-specific field training. "This is the area of training where our students can go into the field and get hands-on training with the lessons they learned in module two as well as train on some new subjects such as Alaskan shelter construction, verbal judo and night vision driving," said Tech. Sgt. Chris Leonard, also an instructor in the course. Through all the modules, we want the students to get a well-rounded idea and understanding of how CRGs and other Global Mobility Forces operate in a deployed environment."

In the most recent set of CR FTU courses, students said the training has been very beneficial.

"When the majority of us showed up for this course, we had no idea exactly what we'd be

doing," said Staff Sgt. Tyler Marks, a load planner and Air Transportation Operations Center information controller for the 123rd Contingency Response Group of the Kentucky Air National Guard at Louisville. "Our course taught us everything we needed to know to set up and operate our CRG unit."

Senior Airman Charles Woods, a maintenance crew chief from the 123rd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, also from Louisville, said he gained insight on CRG capabilities and its mission.

"I think everything that was taught has potential to benefit me in future deployments," Airman Woods said. "In particular, I think the night vision training will definitely be helpful."

Whether it's learning to operate a CRG at night or just gaining the basic understanding of the unit, the course is doing what it was designed to do, Sergeant Oliver said.

"Contingency response Airmen are often the first to respond to a war zone or a humanitarian crisis," Sergeant Oliver said. "This training gets them in the frame of mind for being ready on a moment's notice to go anywhere in the world and be a leading unit for Air Force operations."

Shots from behind the scenes:

USAF EC member recalls deployment to Southwest Asia

By Tech. Sgt. Scott T. Sturkol
U.S. Air Force Expeditionary Center
Public Affairs

The Air Force trained her to be a graphic artist, but when Staff Sgt. Ericka Khudakivskyy deployed to Southwest Asia earlier this year, she found herself documenting the mission in a whole new way.

A member of the U.S. Air Force Expeditionary Center's multi-media section here, Sergeant Khudakivskyy deployed to an undisclosed location in SWA to work as the NCO in charge of multi-media from May to September. From her deployed location, she supported Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation Enduring Freedom and the Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa missions.

"Mostly, I worked with my staff doing photography for the base and for the deployed newspaper, *The Sand Script*," Sergeant Khudakivskyy said. "The deployment was a great experience because I got to see with my own eyes what part the Air Force plays in the war. And to be honest, we are a huge part. It was also interesting to see how the different cultures were within the country and how we are appreciated for what we do to fight the Global War on Terrorism."

In her more than four months on deployment, Sergeant Khudakivskyy took more than 8,000 photos of Air Force deployed operations. Her work not only documented the mission but also captured moments in time that future generations can look back and understand how the Air Force serves as a crucial player in war operations.

It was the first deployment where she worked exclusively doing photography instead of graphic design. She said she learned a lot and also built on a skill she used less frequently at home station.

"Photography helps you capture the event at that split moment — it allows you to get that historical stamp in time," Sergeant Khudakivskyy said. "For me, it was the best job because you get to see all the huge events happen throughout the base and then document it. I went on the flightline all the time and saw how the Air Force operates first hand. There were folks I was deployed with who never went on the flightline and got that experience."

At her deployed base, a large part of the Air Force mission was air refueling support for GWOT. She said learning about that mission helped her better understand the service's "global reach" capability.



Courtesy photo
Staff Sgt. Ericka Khudakivskyy, from the U.S. Air Force Expeditionary Center, takes photos on the flightline of her deployed base while working June 22 in Southwest Asia.

"I learned that air refueling is one of the most important assets the Air Force has," Sergeant Khudakivskyy said. "The refueling support from my deployed base affected an entire region which wouldn't be able to operate without that refueling support."

Whether it was the view through the lens of her camera or through interaction with deployed Airmen, Sergeant Khudakivskyy said she also gained an appreciation for the people behind the mission.

"Even though we weren't exactly on the front lines, all military members completed their job with aggressiveness and pride," Sergeant Khudakivskyy said. "It wasn't a game, and we didn't treat it like it was an exercise. We did it for real!"

There was one moment where she said she felt a burst of pride for her service and country. While working one day to taking photos of flight operations, she was working with another Airman from her staff, and they watched a plane take off.

"The plane began to take off with the front end halfway up and the tail begging to gain air," she said. "The group of Airmen who helped launch the plane cheered and screamed at the top of their lungs a big 'who-hoo, that's what I'm talking about' as it went up and away. They were all proud of what they accomplished. Everyone took great care and pride in everything they did there with precision and excellence."

Deployment success, however, comes from being prepared, Sergeant Khudakivskyy said. She gave some ideas on how Airmen can get ready.

"It's very important that you talk to other people who have deployed to the area where you're deploying," Sergeant Khudakivskyy said. "It is also important to keep up with the news and see what is going on in the world. That way you know what you will be facing when you leave for your location. Lastly, hands-on training is really important and should be done on a constant basis like Advanced Contingency Skills Training, chemical warfare training and others, so that you'll always be prepared."

As a member of the USAF EC, which helps train Airmen for deployments, she said it's good for staff members to get out to get the deployed experience so it can be passed along to other Airmen.

"Since we are a huge part of the training sector, I think it is important for us to deploy because the people who work here have to teach and train Airmen every day," Sergeant Khudakivskyy said. "When someone for the USAF EC deploys, there is no doubt that person will be a huge asset to the Center."

Sergeant Khudakivskyy noted that she's happy to be back from her deployment, and she won't forget it. She'll soon be entering a new career field that will, if she deploys again, have her doing different work.

"I'll miss working out on the flightline with my camera in hand," Sergeant Khudakivskyy said.

"On this deployment, I enjoyed documenting the mission, meeting new Airmen and seeing the Air Force in the fight behind the scenes," she said. "I know we're in it to win, and I hope my small part helped us in that winning effort."

Expeditionary Center instructor returns; talks about helping establish Iraqi AF training school

By Tech. Sgt. Scott T. Sturkol
U.S. Air Force Expeditionary Center Public Affairs

From March to September, Tech. Sgt. Richard Oliver teamed with other Air Force training Airmen in Iraq to help establish an Iraqi air force training school.

Sergeant Oliver deployed from the U.S. Air Force Expeditionary Center's 421st Combat Training Squadron at Fort Dix, N.J., where he serves as a contingency skills training instructor and infrastructure operations assistant section NCO in charge. In Iraq, he worked as a fuels air advisor and instructor for new trainees in the Iraq air force. Because it was a unique mission, he said, he was proud to support it for Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"I was assigned to the Coalition Air Force Transition Team, which is now the 370th Expeditionary Training Squadron," Sergeant Oliver said. "All of us who deployed there were happy to do the mission no matter the hours we worked, what temperature it was, or the work load. Our team had instructors from all over the Air Force — including Airmen from basic military training, maintenance, intel, professional military education, communications, supply, fire and crash and, like myself, from the fuels career field."

Sergeant Oliver said it was a diverse group of Airmen that did a "great effort" in building up the curriculum for the school and getting the mission done.

"We truly came together," Sergeant Oliver said. "We learned from each other. We learned about different careers fields, and we became a team that could not be stopped. The Airmen with whom I was deployed with understood and accepted their role in fighting the Global War on Terrorism."

During his deployment, Sergeant Oliver personally developed more than 200 hours of fuels curriculum for the Iraqi school. He and his team also helped renovate buildings for the school campus. In one renovated building alone, he said his team transformed a 25,000-square-foot building into a temporary school house.

All of the effort, Sergeant Oliver said, was a positive step forward for the Iraqis and their air force.

"You can't believe everything you see on television," Sergeant Oliver said. "It's my impression that Iraqis really do want our help and want a better life. Building up this school for their air force is just one of those efforts to achieve that better life."

Whether it required a concentrated effort to obtain diesel fuel from the Iraqi army or working in the U.S. Army Tactical Operations Center to help support medical evacuation missions, Sergeant Oliver said he did a lot of things he wouldn't normally do at his home station. However, he said, the training before he left was critical, and being prepared was invaluable.

"Being an advanced contingency skills training instructor and having



Courtesy photos

Tech. Sgt. Richard Oliver, from the U.S. Air Force Expeditionary Center, teaches Iraqis how to use one of their fuels trucks during his deployment to Taji Air Base, Iraq.

gone through CST here at the Expeditionary Center with the 421st CTS helped immensely," Sergeant Oliver said. "In the deployed theater, field tactics is big, and knowing how to take care of your body in a deployed location with austere conditions is also important.

"I also studied the region I was deploying to," Sergeant Oliver said.

"That meant looking at things like country, geography, cultural breakdown, history, feelings towards Americans and knowing a little of the language they speak."

Learning some of the language goes a long way in building relationships and trust with the host nation people, Sergeant Oliver added. And, once gained, he said that trust should never be broken. "If you break the trust you've created with a national, you've lost their respect and their willingness to work with you," he said.

Sergeant Oliver said during the more than six months he was in Iraq he saw things improve and knows the groundwork laid out by his team will have lasting effects.



Sergeant Oliver stops for a photo with one of his Iraqi co-workers while deployed to Taji Air Base.

"I learned it doesn't matter what career field you are in, just that you must come together as a team to reach your end goal," Sergeant Oliver said. "It doesn't matter what the rank structure is, how many officers you have or how many senior NCOs you have. Until you all come together as a team you will never reach your stated goal completely. Our team did that and had great success."

Sergeant Oliver said he is glad to be home safe, but remembers there are others out there doing what he was doing — trying to make a difference. "We know we are in this effort to be successful and make things better," he said. "I know my comrades, no matter the service, are out there making a difference for Iraq and in the war."



(Clockwise from top) Students in the Advanced Contingency Skills Training Course 08-2 practice tactics and patrolling on a Fort Dix Range Dec. 4. ACST students begin a scenario in a patrol formation. Students practice patrolling on a road. Students respond to "enemy fire." Tech. Sgt. Samuel Young, ACST instructor from the 421st Combat Training Squadron, provides feedback to students after they completed a scenario. The tactics training takes place during one of the 10 days Airmen are in the ACST course, which is taught by the Center's 421st CTS.



Photos by Tech. Sgt. Scott T. Sturkol



Photos by Tech. Sgt. Scott T. Sturkol
Students in the Phoenix Warrior Course 08-1 drive on a convoy during training at Naval Air Engineering Station Lakehurst, N.J., Oct. 24. The students were doing their three-day field training portion of the course during Exercise Eagle Flag 08-1. Both Phoenix Warrior and Eagle Flag are taught by the Center's 421st Combat Training Squadron.



A village role player interacts with a Phoenix Warrior student during Eagle Flag Oct. 24.



Staff Sgt. Matt Mosher and his military working dog Sheryl, both Phoenix Warrior students from the 22nd Security Forces Squadron, McConnell Air Force Base, Kansas, practice training while participating in Eagle Flag Oct. 24.

First sergeants and Eagle Flag: Training that cares, prepares Airmen

By Airman 1st Class
Stephen Musal
17th Training Wing Public Affairs

Master Sgt. Robin Young, 99th Civil Engineer Squadron first sergeant from Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., describes the job of a first sergeant as “facilitating Airmen success.”

In Air Force Exercise Eagle Flag at Naval Air Engineering Station Lakehurst, N.J., facilitating success of Airmen and caring for them, is never an easy task for a first sergeant. Every exercise, one first sergeant takes on a job which ultimately means supporting nearly 400 Airmen in the exercise.

“Eagle Flag provides an environment completely foreign to most first sergeants,” said Master Sgt. Jack Smith, U.S. Air Force Expeditionary Center first sergeant at Fort Dix, N.J., and the lead cadre for first sergeants during Eagle Flag. “Working in the kind of austere location we provide for the exercise can be overwhelming for a first sergeant when he realizes that even the most basic services may not be in place for a few days. Caring for the troops in these conditions requires a first sergeant to be out in the bunkers talking face-to-face with the Airmen making sure their needs are met.”

During Eagle Flag 08-1 in late October, Sergeant Young said working in the exercise was by no means easy, but added being a first sergeant is never easy — even at home station.

“When I deployed to Balad Air Base, Iraq, I had the luxury of going with many of my Airmen,” Sergeant Young said. “Thankfully, I was able to have that same luxury here with Eagle Flag.”

That meant, Sergeant Young said, he had time to prepare his Airmen for both deployments, and to develop a rapport that was very necessary in the field. For Eagle Flag, that meant deploying into Naval Air Engineering Station Lakehurst and building a base from the ground up.

“I was able to get them in the right mindset well before we got here,” Sergeant Young said. “You’ve got to let the Airmen know what you expect, let them know when they’re not meeting that expectation and keep them focused on meeting that expectation.”

He added that the key was paying attention to the little details. “Obviously, you can’t prepare for everything,” he said, “and when issues come up, you take care of them.”

Eagle Flag 08-1 had quite a few “out-of-the-ordinary” challenges for these Airmen, Sergeant Young said. It ranged from manning defensive fighting positions to building the base.

“We rolled in on an open field,” Sergeant Young said. “It required everybody to be doing the physical part, and as a first sergeant, I needed to



Photo by Airman 1st Class Stephen Musal

Master Sgt. Robin Young, first sergeant deployed to Air Force Exercise Eagle Flag 08-1 from the 99th Civil Engineer Squadron at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., talks with Airmen deployed to the exercise Oct. 23.

make sure that people are taken care of as well. Stress is tough out here — not like Balad, getting live fire, but stressful here because we work our people long hours in tough conditions.”

Sergeant Smith said when he’s evaluating first sergeants at Eagle Flag, he doesn’t spend a lot of time following the deployed first sergeant’s footsteps. Rather, he said, he looks at the overall picture and sees how the Airmen are being cared for.

“I find I can tell a whole lot more about the kind of job a first sergeant is doing by looking at other indicators,” Sergeant Smith said. “For instance, if morale is good and troops know what they’re supposed to be doing, and the enlisted force has a clear understanding of the commander’s vision, then I know a good first sergeant is taking care of business.”

For Sergeant Young in the most recent Eagle Flag, he said managing stress that might have followed an Airman from home station was also a priority.

“If an Airman is worried about something going on back at home, he can’t focus on what we need him to be focusing on here,” Sergeant Young said. “Still, it was more base-building here and less people-leading than anywhere else.”

Even with the difficult tasks of Eagle Flag and being a first sergeant in general, Sergeant Young said that being a first sergeant was the “best job in the world.”

“From about a year into the Air Force, I knew I was going to be a first sergeant,” Sergeant Young said. Sergeant Young encourages other motivated Airmen to think about being a first sergeant as well.

Sergeant Smith added that first sergeants are important in any situation.

“In the deployed environment, the Airmen must be able to focus on doing their primary mission,” Sergeant Smith said. “The first sergeant is key to making sure the hundred other things that an Airman worries about are taken care of. In the deployed environment, that can be everything from helping with tent building and working out the shower tent schedule to handling emergency leave cases and advising the commander on discipline issues. It’s all in a day’s work for a deployed first sergeant.”

In Eagle Flag 08-1, students successfully built a forward operating base from the ground up. Airmen from career fields across the Air Force made that happen, Sergeant Young said. Those Airmen balanced time between their normal jobs with duties outside their specialty — such as with tent-building and security.

“We accomplished a lot more than others might have due to our planning,” Sergeant Young said.

Sergeant Young added that his great team of Airmen made his job much easier. “We really tasked our Airmen hard, and they stepped up.”

The success Sergeant Young saw during the exercise is in no small part due to the first sergeant being an effective leader, Sergeant Smith said.

Still, Sergeant Young said he wasn’t surprised by the success of his Airmen in the exercise.

“It’s inherent in the Air Force,” he said. “We don’t fail.”

(Note: Airman Musal deployed to Eagle Flag 08-1 from Goodfellow Air Force Base, Texas.)



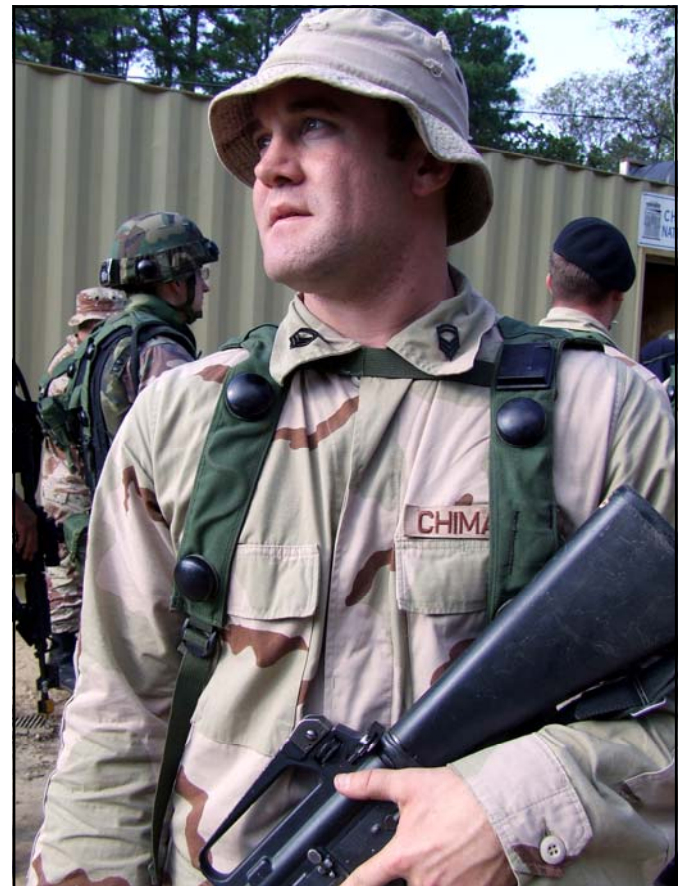
FACES OF EAGLE FLAG 08-1



Tech. Sgt. Greg Hasecuster, 421st CTS, watches a scenario for Exercise Eagle Flag 08-1 Oct. 20.

Photos by Tech. Sgt. Scott T. Sturkol
Airman 1st Class Patrick Murphy, 818th Contingency Response Group, McGuire Air Force Base, N.J., responds to a scenario for Exercise Eagle Flag 08-1 at Naval Air Engineering Station Lakehurst, N.J., Oct. 20. Eagle Flag is operated by the U.S. Air Force Expeditionary Center's 421st Combat Training Squadron.

(Right) Second Lt. Neil Wood, 1st Combat Communications Squadron, Ramstein Air Base, Germany, works on setting up communications equipment Oct. 23.



An Airman plays the role of a soldier in the "National Army of Chimaera" for Eagle Flag 08-1 Oct. 20.



(Left) Airmen deployed to the exercise work together to put up an Alaskan shelter in the main camp Oct. 23.

Vehicle maintainers keep USAF EC's wheels turning



Photos by Tech. Sgt. Scott T. Sturkol

Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Day, auto mechanic from the 305th Logistics Readiness Squadron, McGuire Air Force Base, N.J., working for the U.S. Air Force Expeditionary Center's Expeditionary Operations School vehicle maintenance shop on Fort Dix, makes repairs to a HMMWV Oct. 12 in his shop.



(Above) Senior Airman Kevin Roberts, auto mechanic from the 305th Logistics Readiness Squadron working for the Center's Expeditionary Operations School vehicle maintenance shop, works on repairs for a HMMWV Oct. 12.

(Left) Staff Sgt. Darron Knecht, NCO in charge of vehicle operations for EOS, looks over the engine of a HMMWV Oct. 12. Sergeant Knecht manages a fleet of vehicles that includes HMMWVs, trucks, forklifts, four-wheeler all terrain vehicles, and standard trucks, cars and vans.

Committed: Chaplain assistants continue devotion to Airmen

By Tech. Sgt. Scott T. Sturkol
U.S. Air Force Expeditionary Center
Public Affairs

In a unique E-9 quorum, the Air Force and three command functional chiefs for the service's chaplain assistant career field came together at the U.S. Air Force Expeditionary Center in early November to discuss current issues of the day and the future mission of their career field.

Their visit to Fort Dix was mainly to observe and discuss pre-deployment training; however, as the Air Force chaplain assistant functional manager said, the "quorum" gave a unique opportunity for them to discuss the career field and its challenges for the future.

"People don't really understand our career field," Chief Johnson said. "They understand we're small in numbers, but I think the impact we have is huge. Our career field is here to resource and manage spiritual care and our Airmen are committed to that duty. The Chaplain Service is all about providing spiritual care to our Airmen — whether they're deployed or at home base."

Along with Chief Johnson, other functional chiefs for the chaplain assistant career field visiting were Chief Master Sgts. Russ Geyer from Air Mobility Command, Scott Turner from Air Education and Training Command, and Geoffrey Preudhomme of Air Combat Command.

Each chief was asked to give their own description of what a chaplain assistant is and their importance to the mission. Each had a unique response.

"As we say in our career field, we are the eyes and the ears of the chaplain," Chief Turner said. "We get out and help steer the chaplains where they need to go because a lot of times an (enlisted) Airman will approach another (enlisted) Airman a lot sooner than they'll approach an officer. There's an automatic connection made because we walked in the same boots they've walked in. We can help build that bridge to the chaplain and get them the help they need."

Chief Geyer related his definition to that of a quote from Army Gen. George C. Marshall of World War II fame who said, "Military power wins battles, but spiritual power wins wars."

"That's what we do," Chief Geyer said. "We're on that spiritual side advocating for our troops the importance of spiritual care because in the end, when the bullets are flying, it's that spiritual power that's really going to sustain us and get us through those tough times. In war, there's the physical aspect, the emotional aspect, and the spiritual aspect. All three of those have to be very strong for us to be successful."

Chief Preudhomme said the chaplain assistant is like a refueling tanker for the Chaplain Service because they "extend the reach" of chaplains everywhere.

"We give the chaplain depth and breadth as we provide for the spiritual needs of warfighters wherever they are," Chief Preudhomme said. "Chaplain assistants are able to network and build relationships with frontline supervisors so we are able to know the spiritual lay of the land. Through that, we can readily identify whether there are morale problems or there are concerns. We can also readily identify that to the chaplain who can relay that to the chain of command."

Chief Johnson said chaplain assistants are uniquely qualified.

"It's really simple," Chief Johnson said. "We're the only career field that is trained to take care of the spiritual needs of our Airmen. It's that expertise that we've cultivated over the years that is bearing fruit in the deployed environment right now, and commanders are seeing the value of what we do."

Chaplain assistants are also some of the Airmen who deploy the most in the Air Force, Chief Johnson said. The high deployment rate, along with career field personnel cuts that are part of the overall Air Force drawdown, are creating leadership challenges, but chaplain assistants across the board are following their hearts and staying devoted to their work.

"One of the nice things is operations tempo has not seemed to affect our retention rate," Chief Johnson said. "We're a pretty stable force when you look at the numbers. So people aren't just running out because we're deploying. I think people have accepted that this is the way the Air Force is. They know this is why they put on the suit, and they know it's part of the obligation."

"I'm very proud of the chaplain assistants and the chaplains out there who are going (on deployment) so regularly," Chief Johnson said. "We may not be like the operators who are gone on a different schedule, but we're a busy career field."

The career field's future shows authorized manning going from 458 currently assigned positions to 321 as the drawdown runs its course, Chief Johnson said. That's going to require changes and tough decisions, but he said they are working that leadership challenge feverishly.

"What we're doing, through a process we call global ministry, is focus on the highest priorities," Chief Johnson said. "We're making sure our chaplains and wing NCOs in charge out there are going through a needs assessment process that tells them what the highest priorities at their base for spiritual care. Then we



focus our energies on those priorities."

Chief Johnson said most often those priorities will likely coincide with the commander's priorities. "We're walking a fine line — we're trying to take care of and prepare the Airmen we're deploying and at the same time we have to have the resources, especially overseas, left behind to take care of the families who are there."

Chief Turner said he believes a lot of the work chaplain assistants and chaplains completes goes unnoticed — mostly because there's no real way to measure it.

"Some say the Chaplain Service will make more saves than anyone will ever be able to measure," Chief Turner said. "Because when that chaplain or chaplain assistant is out visiting and a person asks, 'Do you have a minute?' Maybe the only thing that comes out of that conversation is a meeting at the office the next day. But now that person feels better because they concentrate on their job, and we'll never realize what kind of save was just made."

Whether it's defining the chaplain assistant Airman, preparing for deployments, or handling the leadership challenges in an even smaller career field, each chief wants all Airmen to know they have their needs and concerns in mind.

"We're kind of like an iceberg," Chief Geyer said. "For us, as chaplain assistants, it's about the Airmen out there and caring for their spiritual needs. The Airmen are what you see above the water. But our job, and our challenges are even bigger if you look at the part of the iceberg below the sea. When you look below, there you have the families and all the tributaries of those families that are far reaching."

Chief Johnson added, "Our job is difficult because as spiritual providers, the inherent responsibility we feel is we've got to take care of all Airmen and their families.

"We'll continue to make sure we do that to the best of our ability."

If I only had a minute with each of them

By Tech. Sgt. Scott T. Sturkol
U.S. Air Force Expeditionary Center Public Affairs

In the spring of 2001, I made my first visit to Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia.

I was attending some training at Fort Meade, Md., at the time and during one of the weekends I was there, I went with a classmate to see this famed cemetery of heroes.

It's a big place where you can see rows upon rows of white grave stones marking the landscape. The day I was there, it was a sunny spring day with blossoms blooming brightly in the morning sunshine.

The first sight of it really struck me because it felt somewhat ironic. Here new life was springing from the trees which lay dormant all winter long, yet they were amidst the remains of heroes who gave their lives to our country's freedom so we all could enjoy the life we have. Even years later I can still smell how those blossoms permeated the air.

I arrived there right around 10 a.m. I didn't see any funerals take place, but I didn't need to because I knew all I needed to know just by looking at each of the grave stones. It was a process that ended up taking my whole day.

Each step I took felt as though I was walking amongst the most hallowed ground anywhere. It felt like I shouldn't walk, but freeze where I stood. It seemed to me that even leaving a blade of grass out of place was disrespectful. However, I forged on.

I stopped and read the inscription on the first grave and it was that of an Army first lieutenant who died in World War I. It had been a long time since World War I had ended. It was from that war where we got Veterans Day. It comes from Nov. 11, 1918, where major hostilities of World War I were formally ended at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month of 1918 with the German signing of the Armistice.

The grave stone showed the lieutenant died before the war had ended. That's when I had a thought - how awesome would it be to sit down with this lieutenant and hear his story if only for a minute? This lieutenant could tell me things about his life, his family, his military training at West Point, and who know what else. It actually made me think of this person in life rather than in death.

As I slowly walked among the hundreds and hundreds of head stones, I had the same thought run through my head — if only I had a minute with each of them, what could they tell me?

On one head stone, I saw the name of Navy man who died at Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1945. In another spot, I saw a Revolutionary War general. And across the way, I saw heroes from the 1982 Beirut terrorist bombing and veterans of Operation Desert Storm. Oh, for just one minute, how enlightening it would be to hear their stories? I imagined it would be that of great history and heroism.

After about seven hours, I left Arlington a changed man. For one thing, it was a great honor to see this hallowed place where so many of our nation's heroes are buried. It was also a great learning experience, because I left there knowing what incredible people our nation has produced while not only creating our nation, but defending it as well.

Since then, in every cemetery I go to, I've searched out the grave stones of the military veterans who are buried there. I've never found a cemetery yet where there isn't at least one. And when I look upon the stone, I still ask that same question to myself — what would it be like to have one minute with them?

Fortunately, even though I can imagine what it might be like to talk to these heroes, their legacy lives on through others. In the United States, there are millions of veterans who are still alive and most likely have a minute to spare to tell their story.

Every time I run across a veteran, I ask them what their story is and

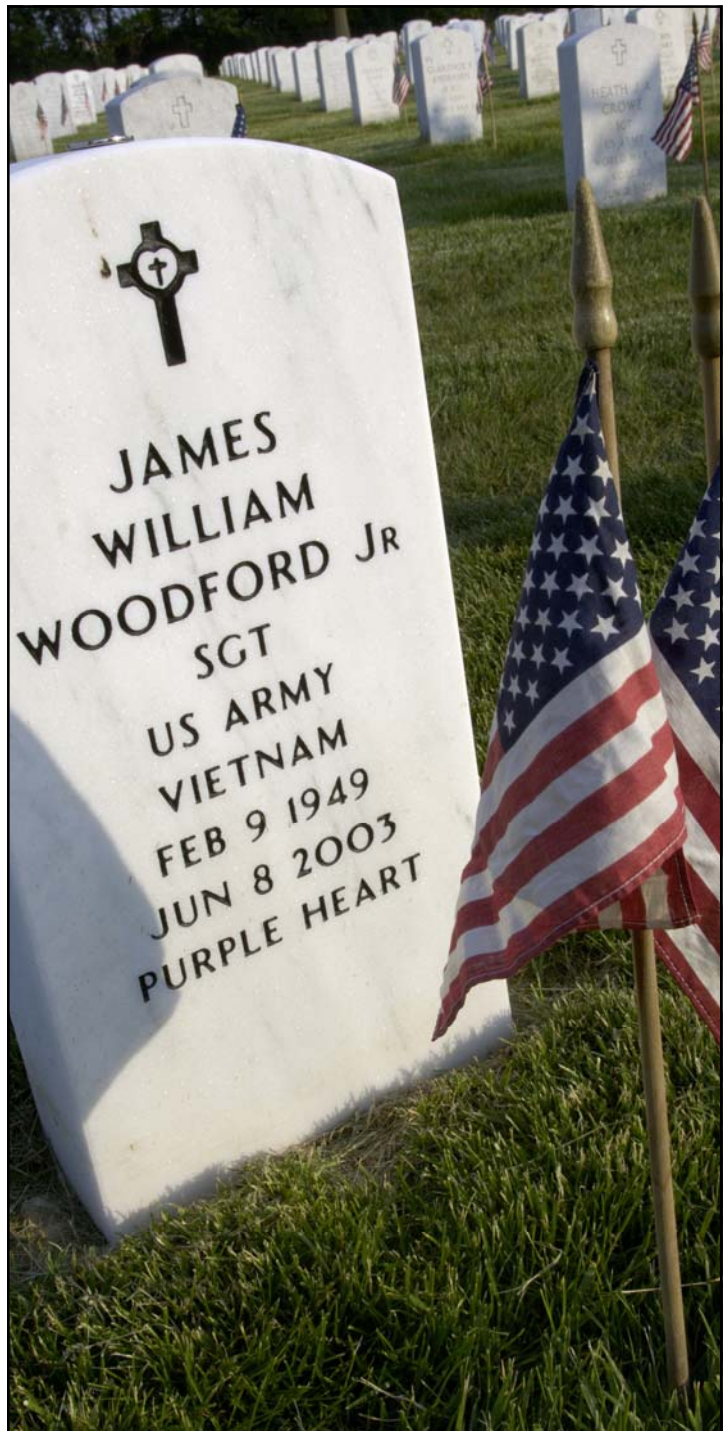


Photo by Master Sgt. Jim Varhegyi
Grave sites at Arlington National Cemetery are adorned with American flags May 25, 2006.

then I thank them. I've learned so much by doing that.

During Veterans Day, and every day, I encourage you to take the time to remember our nation's veterans.

Their stories and their life's contribution to defending our nation are worth a minute of anyone's time.



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Scott T. Sturkol

Holiday STEPrise

Newly promoted Tech. Sgt. Michael Tesch, explosive ordnance disposal craftsman with the U.S. Air Force Expeditionary Center's 421st Combat Training Squadron, opens a gift box with new technical sergeant stripes Dec. 20 from Maj. Gen. Kip Self, USAF EC commander. Sergeant Tesch received his new rank through the Stripes for Exceptional Performers, or STEP, program. During the commander's call, Sergeant Tesch was also presented with the Air Force Combat Action Medal. Cheering the promotion is Chief Master Sgt. Jeffrey Helm, USAF EC command chief.

The Expeditionary Airman Salutes ...

Promotions for October,
November, December

Congratulations to the following U.S. Air
Force Expeditionary Center "Eagles" who
sewed on new rank in this past quarter:

To major
Carmilla Tatel
Jennifer Yates
To captain
Teri Hunter
To senior master sergeant
Lawrie Barroner
Stacey Tansits

To master sergeant
Marcus Hughes
To technical sergeant
Wyatt Bloom
Angie Caballero
Timothy Land
Norman Ramos

USAF EC quarterly winners

Congratulations to the following USAF EC
"Eagles" selected as the Center's best in the
most recent quarterly awards competition:

Company Grade Officer of the Quarter
Capt. Phong Thach
Senior Noncommissioned Officer
of the Quarter
Master Sgt. Richard Woods
Noncommissioned Officer of the Quarter
Tech. Sgt. Jon Malone
Airman of the Quarter
Senior Airman Eljurious Whiteside
Civilian of the Quarter (Category I)
Ms. Sandy Lewis
Civilian of the Quarter (Category II)
Ms. Sue Anderson



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Scott T. Sturkol

Raven instructors earn AMC security forces awards

Congratulations to **Tech. Sgt. Daniel Koenigsmann** (shown at left in a Raven scenario with fake weapon), Raven instructor for the 421st Combat Training Squadron, for his recent selection as the 2007 Air Mobility Command Outstanding Security Forces Raven Team Leader Award winner.

Congratulations to **Staff Sgt. James Chubb**, also a Raven instructor with the 421st CTS, on his selection as the 2007 AMC Outstanding Security Forces Raven Team Member Award winner.

The 421st CTS has been teaching the Air Force Phoenix Raven Program for more than 10 years and has graduated nearly 2,000 students in that time. According to retired Col. Rocky Lane, who holds the Raven #1 designator, Ravens "have never lost a plane" during their missions throughout the world since 1997.

'Eagle' selected for DOD 'Why We Serve' program

Tech. Sgt. Parlyn McClain, U.S. Air Force Expeditionary Center's 421st Combat Training Squadron intelligence flight, was selected to represent the Air Force in the Department of Defense's "Why We Serve" outreach program.

Each year, through the program, nine representatives from all the armed services travel across the country telling people about their recent deployed experience.

Sergeant McClain was deployed to Kabul, Afghanistan from September 2006 to March 2007 as an intelligence analyst supporting Combined Forces Forces-Afghanistan.

During her deployment, Sergeant McClain worked with all four branches of the U.S. military, various other government agencies and more than 20 coalition countries.

"Daily, I would drive back and forth between U.S. and coalition camps in Kabul and Bagram, Afghanistan, and I would brief U.S. and coalition commanding generals on information obtained," Sergeant McClain said. "I initially learned what was happening around the country of Afghanistan as the sole manager of the country-wide database that reported information gathered from people with direct knowledge of enemy and or terrorist activities. Our team was responsible for ensuring the timely and accurate reporting and sharing of information between U.S. and coalition partners."



Maj. Gen. Kip Self, U.S. Air Force Expeditionary Center commander, presents a commander's coin to Tech. Sgt. Parlyn McClain, 421st Combat Training Squadron, for her selection to the DOD's "Why We Serve" Program.

Photo by Tech. Sgt. Scott T. Sturkol

'Eagles' bring together families for holidays



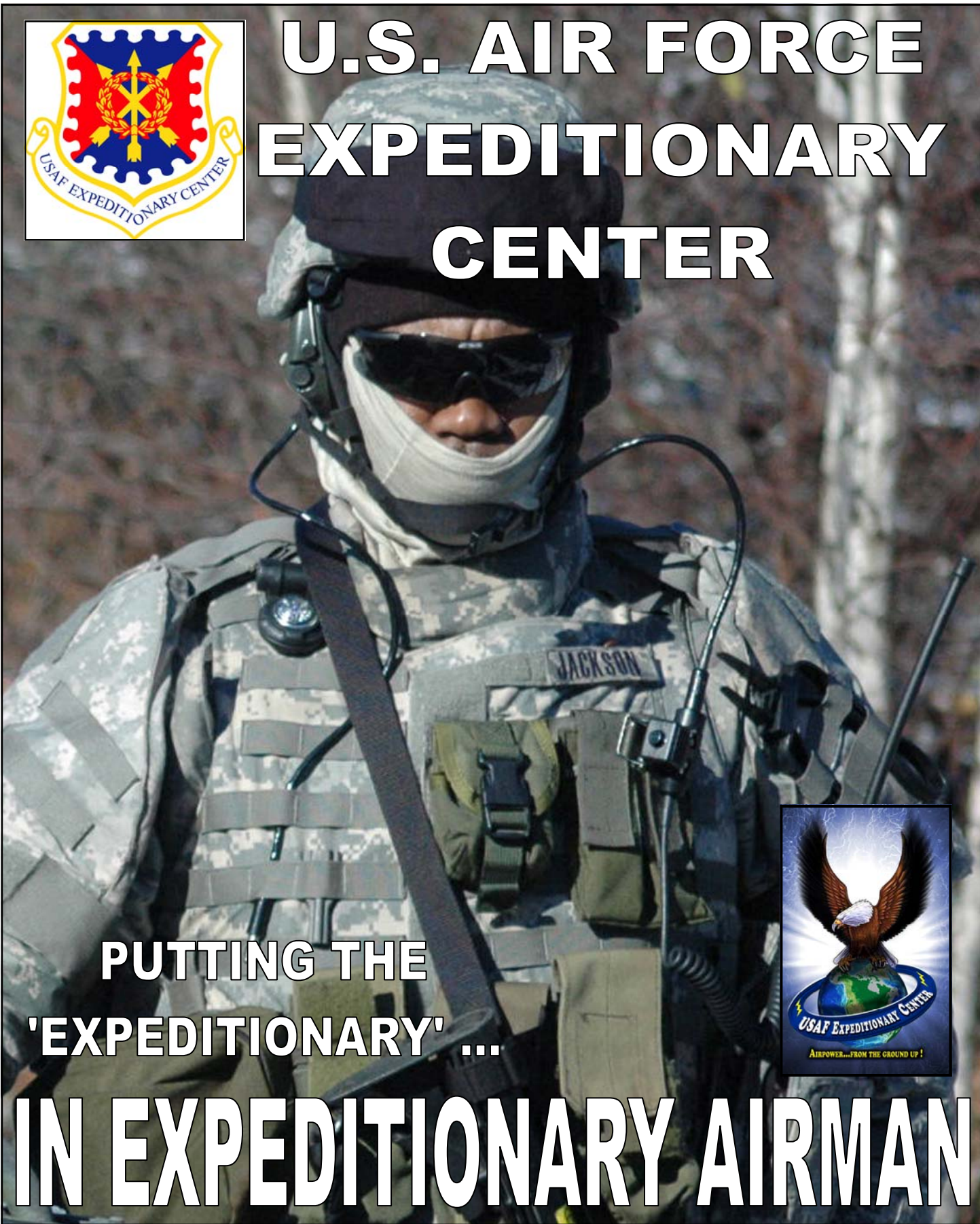
Photos by Tech. Sgt. Scott and Bobbi Sturkol

(Clockwise from top left) U.S. Air Force Expeditionary Center members dig in for a Center-wide Thanksgiving feast Nov. 15. Tech. Sgt. Angie Caballero, Expeditionary Operations School, leads a game for children during the Center's children harvest festival Nov. 3. Center members attending their 2007 holiday party at the Fort Dix Club Dec. 15 vie for a chance to be the first to trivia questions for table eating privileges. Tech. Sgt. Christine Sanders, playing the role of "Mrs. Claus," reads a book to children during the Center's children holiday party Dec. 1.





U.S. AIR FORCE EXPEDITIONARY CENTER



PUTTING THE
'EXPEDITIONARY' ...

IN EXPEDITIONARY AIRMAN

