

102nd Fighter Wing Seagull

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A photograph of two military personnel in dark blue uniforms and caps, standing in profile. The person in the foreground is holding a folded American flag. The background shows a blurred outdoor setting with trees.

Honor,
Duty
& Tradition

An inside look
at the Base Honor Guard

ON THE COVER

Members of the 102nd Fighter Wing Honor Guard, Master Sgt. John Mallard and Master Sgt Wes Smith perform at a funeral detail .

Photo by Senior Airman James Regan

Seagull

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Call signs "Sign, sign, everywhere a sign"
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Susan Krim was recently promoted to Senior Master Sgt. while deployed to Saudi Arabia. She works in the Command Post and has been in the 102nd Fighter Wing for over 20 years.

A MODERN DAY Ready



Colonel Richard Dupuis

As residents of Massachusetts, we share a rich historical heritage. For a lot of us, the last time we embraced all the history around us was on a 6th grade field trip to see the Bunker Hill Monument, visit the site of the Battle of Concord and Lexington, or walk aboard the USS Constitution. This was a point drilled home to me recently with a visit from my son, Justin. He's an F-16 instructor pilot stationed at Luke Air Force Base, Arizona. He's quite a history buff and is currently reading "1776" by David McCullough. He took a day trip into Boston to put some authenticity into what he was reading.

Included in this vast New England history is the establishment of the Minutemen – the 102nd Fighter Wing's lineage to the past. As early as 1645, in Lexington, Massachusetts, and surrounding areas, the need for a rapidly deployable force to react to any British threat was recognized. Expect the unexpected. So the equivalent of a modern day Special Forces team was put together and on the ready line. The men selected for this all important role were under the age of 25, enthusiastic, reliable, and also the ones with the most attitude. You know - the kind who wanted to kick butt and take names later.

So how do these militia men differ from us as members of the Massachusetts Air National Guard today? Let me count the ways. For one, life was a lot simpler in the 1600s ... not a lot of distractions from the television, answering machine, overflowing inboxes or e-mail accounts. And you can bet their cell phones weren't ringing off the hook. Telemarketers weren't calling in the middle of dinner, nobody wanted to sell them anything and they

could actually spank their kids if they acted up. Their lifespan was considerably less so retirement planning wasn't a problem. Fast food and trans fats weren't invented so their arteries weren't slamming shut. And finally, the legal system as we currently know it; one in which you can sue someone for looking at you wrong, didn't exist!

The bottom line is modern day stresses. All our military predecessors had to do was slap on some clothes, grab the gun and they were out the door. You and I on the other hand, have to consider so much more. We have to be modern day ready. What does that mean? It means proper planning for our present and future livelihood. It means having a game plan for life under

all circumstances. It means checking your Social Security statement each year to insure proper credit has been made, it means looking at your credit report annually to make sure someone else hasn't taken over your financial life. It also means having a dependent care program in place for your children, and a will and power of attorney as needed. Additionally, it means we need to keep our emergency information up to date and keep our life insurance beneficiaries current. We all need to take responsibility for our own career and retirement planning. A person without a plan is like a ship without a course. Where you'll end up depends entirely on the tide.

Whether an individual could "see the whites of their eyes" in colonial times, or is proudly serving today with the 102nd Fighter Wing – the objective is the same.

To keep this great land that we know as home – free!

“A person without a plan is like a ship without a course. Where you'll end up depends entirely on the tide.”

Massachusetts to host Air Force week

The United States Air Force has announced that the Massachusetts Air National Guard and the Boston metro region were selected as one of the six locations to host "Air Force Week," Aug. 18-26, 2007. Massachusetts is home to the 102nd Fighter Wing on Cape Cod and the 104th Fighter Wing based in Westfield.

Activities are scheduled around the Boston area and will culminate with the 2007 Cape Cod Air Show scheduled Aug. 25-26, 2007. The show will feature the elite Air Force Demonstration team, the Thunderbirds.

"Airmen from throughout the Commonwealth continue to be key players in the Global War on Terror. They are your family, neighbors and friends," said Brig. Gen. Michael D. Akey, Massachusetts Air National Guard commander. "Air Force Week gives the citizens of our state the opportunity to pause and remember that there are talented,

dedicated, professional Airmen serving around the world day and night to keep America safe."

The weeklong event gives people the opportunity to see and meet active duty Air Force reserve and Air National Guardsmen who are engaged in operations throughout the world. Airmen endure hardship, confront danger and may pay the ultimate sacrifice in service to our nation. The week is dedicated to telling their story and thanking the city of Boston for their support.

Due to the tremendous success of Air Force Week last year in St. Louis, the program has been expanded. Phoenix, Sacramento, St. Louis, Atlanta and Honolulu have also been selected.

If you have any questions relative to this event please contact Massachusetts Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs at 508-233-6560.

Film depicts the history of the 102nd

A documentary film "Legacy," the history of the 102nd Fighter Wing and the 101st Fighter Squadron, is now available for sale.

The film contains actual footage and numerous photographs of personnel and aircraft from the inception of the 101st in the early 1900s through the establishment of the wing after World War II right up to the present day activities involving 9/11 and current deployments.

It is a valuable history that each wing member may want to possess.

You may obtain a copy by making a minimum \$25 (tax deductible) contribution to the Massachusetts Air National Guard Historical Association Museum.

A copy of the film, either DVD or VHS, will be available at Arnold Hall during unit training assemblies.

The UTAs will be the primary means of obtaining a copy of the film.

However, many former members of the Wing and its affiliated units no longer visit Otis or subscribe to the Seagull, therefore, we have no way of contacting them.

You could help the museum if you know the whereabouts of any former members by letting them know about the film's availability. Your assistance would be greatly appreciated.

Contact Tom Maguire at 508-759-3092 for more information.

What's for lunch?



Saturday, March 31
Shepherd's Pie
Sausage Pepper-Onions
French Fries
Baked Beans / Peas
Chef's Choice Soup

Sunday, April 1
Baked Ham
Buffalo Chix
Mashed Potatoes
Rice / Corn / Broccoli
Chef's Choice soup

Upcoming Drill dates

2007

March 31-April 1
May 5-6
June 2-3
Aug. 25-26
Sept. 15-16
Oct. 13-14
Nov. 3-4
Dec. 1-2

Drill hours are 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturdays and 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Sundays.

Seagull deadline

The deadline for submission of articles for the next Seagull is 2 p.m., Sunday, April 1. No articles can be accepted after this deadline.

The public affairs staff has the right to edit all articles for content and length.

Items should be sent over the LAN to both james.regan@maotis.ang.af.mil, and clifford.mcdonald@maotis.ang.af.mil, or prepared on a floppy disk, preferably in Word for Windows.

Articles on disk also should be submitted with a printed copy to the Public Affairs Office, Building 158, room 209. For more information call 508-968-4090.

Lieutenant General H Steven Blum extended as Chief, National Guard Bureau

The National Guard Bureau Chief, Lieutenant General H Steven Blum, was notified January 26 that the United States Senate confirmed his nomination for a two-year extension in his current position. In December 2006, he was nominated for this extension by President Bush. General Blum will have served as the chief for four years in April 2007.

During his tenure, Lt. Gen. Blum has presided over the transformation of the National Guard from a strategic reserve to an operational force. In the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 attacks, he rebalanced the National Guard to ensure the nation's governors would have at least one-half of their National Guard available at all times to mitigate the effects of potential catastrophic events. During Hurricane Katrina, he directed the largest military response to a national disaster in American his-



Lt. Gen. H Steven Blum

tory, sending more than 50,000 Guardsmen from every state and territory to relieve the badly stricken Gulf states. In 2006, General Blum answered the President's and four southwestern governors' call to send up to 6,000 troops to support the cus-

toms and border patrol mission along the border. The largest mobilization of the Guard since WWII also occurred during General Blum's first four years as the National Guard Bureau Chief.

He is the senior uniformed National Guard officer responsible for formulating, developing and coordinating all policies, programs and plans affecting more than half a million Army and Air National Guard personnel. Appointed by the President, he serves as the principal adviser to the Secretary and Chief of Staff of the Army, and the Secretary and Chief of Staff of the Air Force on all National Guard issues. As NGB Chief, he serves as the Army's and Air Force's official channel of communication with the Governors and Adjutants General. Prior to his current assignment, General Blum served as Chief of Staff, United States Northern Command.

Tyler Ryan Portlock Memorial Golf Tournament

**By Senior Airman Matt Benedetti
Public Affairs Staff**

The 2nd Annual Tyler's Tee Time Memorial Golf Tournament will be held on Saturday, May 19, 2007 at the Stow Acres Country Club in Stow. All proceeds from the tournament will benefit Children's Hospital Boston in memory of Lt. Tim Portlock's son, Tyler.

The event promises to be a great time and slots are certain to fill up quickly. Last year's successful tournament raised over \$23,000. The competition will begin at 1:30 and offer several valuable prizes, including \$50,000 for a "Hole in One."

"Children's Hospital is committed to pioneering ground-breaking

research and life saving treatments that impact the health of children around the world," said Lt. Portlock of Flight Services. "The money raised will keep Children's Hospital at the forefront of pediatric care, research, training and community service. Above all, it will help ensure the best possible care available to all children, like Tyler, who have been affected with a cardiac defect," he said.

During Tyler's hospitalization, the staff at Children's not only cared for Tyler, but took care of his parents as well. "They allowed us to remain by Tyler's side every step of the way. We are grateful for the fighting chance that his medical

team gave him and for the precious time we shared with our baby boy," recalled Portlock. "For five weeks, the incredible staff of medical professionals worked vigorously to save our son."

Tim and his wife Christine welcome Otis personnel to play, volunteer or stop by for dinner. Please contact Lt. Portlock at 781-640-4529 or @portlockt@k12.waltham.ma.us to register, donate raffle items or make a donation.

The registration deadline is May 5, 2007 and checks should be made out to the Tyler Ryan Portlock Memorial Foundation, 28 Fayette Road, Bedford, MA 01730.

Five 102nd Airmen selected best of best at state competition



*State, First Sergeant of the Year
Master Sgt. Brian Eastman*



*State, Airman of the Year
Senior Airman Shawn W. O'Leary*



*State, Senior NCO of the Year
Master Sgt. Mark Swanton*

State level Airmen of the Year 2006 awards

**By Cliff McDonald
Public Affairs Staff**

Every year, the Massachusetts Air National Guard recognizes seven enlisted people for their professionalism, community service and self-improvement efforts. By all accounts, 2006 was a banner year for several Airmen from the 102nd Fighter Wing who were selected as honorees of the year in five out of the seven categories at state level. In order to compete at the state level, all had previously competed for wing level recognition programs like quarterly and yearly Airmen of the quarter boards.

They each gave all they had and in the end, did themselves proud. They now go on to represent the Massachusetts Air National Guard at national level competition for best of the best.

The award for "Outstanding First Sergeant of the Year 2006" went to Master Sergeant Brian Eastman, first sergeant of the 102nd Logistics Readiness Squadron. Sergeant Eastman is a drill status Guardsman who is credited by Lt. Col. Wayne

Theroux, deputy commander of the 102nd Mission Support Group, with spending countless hours while off duty visiting members in hospitals, attending wakes and funerals, and functions units in support of his squadron.

According to the colonel, "Sergeant Eastman served as the first sergeant for Operation Task Force Yankee. On short notice, he took leave of his civilian employment and reported for duty, conducted a selective recall of 107 wing personnel who worked around the clock for the next two days deploying 500 Massachusetts Guardsmen and 406,000 pounds of cargo on 17 aircraft in support of Hurricane Katrina humanitarian relief." For more information on Sergeant Eastman, see Seagull edition, April 2005.

"Remarkable and responsible for lasting positive contributions to the intelligence section," said Maj. David McNulty of Staff Sergeant Shawn O'Leary. Sergeant O'Leary picked up yet another award this year being selected as the Massa-



*State, NCO of the Year
Staff Sgt. Bill Alexson*



*State, Honor Guard Member of the Year
Staff Sgt. David Harris*

(See State awards, Page 18)

Quarterly award winners announced



*Senior NCO of the Quarter
Senior Master Sgt. James LeBlanc*



*NCO of the Quarter
Tech. Sgt. Jeffrey Morassi*



*Airman of the Quarter
Senior Airman Alexis Colonna*

By Cliff McDonald Public Affairs Staff

Airmen from the Security Forces Squadron, the Judge Advocate Office, and the Maintenance Squadron were the wing's award recipients for the First Quarter 2007.

Senior Master Sgt. James A. LeBlanc was chosen as the Outstanding Senior Noncommissioned Officer of the Quarter, while Tech. Sgt. Jeffrey S. Morassi was selected as the Outstanding Noncommissioned Officer of the Quarter, and Senior Airman Alexis R. Colonna was singled out as being the Outstanding Airman of the Quarter.

Sergeant LeBlanc is the full-time superintendent of the 102nd Security Forces Squadron. His leadership has assisted the squadron in the completing and updating of all security special instructions and operating procedures. These documents are the main source of information for all Security Forces posted sentries, and are essential tools in maintaining the maximum force protection posture for all wing assets.

As a resource advisor, Sergeant LeBlanc shares responsibility for oversight of the Security Agreement budget for which projections for the current fiscal year showed a \$160,000 shortfall, this deficit impacted the wing's security posture. His quick coordination with the Guard Bureau helped mitigate the shortage by 65

percent, and averted a potential furlough of security personnel.

When a nationwide National Guard manpower reduction decreased full-time security force staffing by 20 percent, Sergeant LeBlanc wasted no time in developing new shift schedules and personnel assignments to ensure that wing assets were secured, and that services extended to the Massachusetts Military Reservation were maintained.

He was a key contributor to the squadron's success during the 2006 Unit Compliance Inspection (UCI). He presided over an extensive squadron compliance checklist overhaul ensuring 100 percent compliance with all requirements within his area of responsibility.

As a member of the wing's exercise evaluation team, he participated in planning weapons of mass destruction exercise. Sergeant LeBlanc also coordinates the Security Forces Squadron's drive for the Combined Federal Campaign. He is particularly passionate about pediatric cancer research, and the United Animal Nations which was responsible for rescuing and reuniting of pets with their owners following the Hurricane Katrina disaster.

Sergeant Morassi serves as a traditional Guardsman, paralegal in the wing's Judge Advocate Office where he is experienced in counseling and drafting last wills and testaments for

unit members.

He is recognized by wing, group and squadron commanders as going far beyond his normal and expected duties to provide comfort during a time of increased need when he took care of a unit member who recently experienced a death in his family.

Sergeant Morassi took charge of preparations in the legal office prior to the UCI. According to his supervisors, he worked tirelessly to ensure that not only were legal preparations sound, solid and unquestionable, but also ensured that the legal office consistently provided support for this base wide effort. He created a claims processing continuity binder, as well as the legal office's compliance and standardization requirements checklist.

Sergeant Morassi spearheaded legal office support for a base wide effort to get family care plans expertly prepared prior the UCI. During November alone, he coordinated and executed required documents, including powers of attorney, health care proxies, along with last wills and testaments for more than 75 unit members.

Sergeant Morassi is currently enrolled in a graduate level course in Physics, Energy and the Environment at Bridgewater State College. This advanced course directly ties into his continuous professional development

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Honor guard, not for everyone

By Cliff McDonald
Public Affairs Staff

Being a member of the honor guard is not for everyone, it takes a person with a lot of heart, lots of desire and commitment. This job can be challenging. There are some winter days when they are participating at funerals in below-zero temperatures and summer days when the heat index is over one hundred degrees. They get rained on, snowed on, and sunburned. It's not for the faint-of-heart, but it is for those who want to know the feeling of walking away from a funeral or other ceremonial function with a feeling of pride.

Staff Sgt. David Harris of the 102nd Logistics Readiness Squadron is such a person; he has been selected as the Massachusetts Air National Guard's "Honor Guard Member of the Year 2006."

Sergeant Harris, a full time National Guard technician, is originally from Gardner where he attended high school, but now makes Pawtucket, R.I., his home. He graduated from Johnson & Wales University in 2005 where he earned an associates degree in baking and a bachelor's degree in food service management. While a college student, he performed countless hours of community service. Whether feeding homeless veterans, assisting as a teachers' aide, or helping low income elementary school students with their studies, he takes pride in contributing.

The sergeant enlisted in the Massachusetts Air National Guard in 2001 and first served the 102nd Fighter Wing as a supply journeyman, and currently as a materials handler with the Logistics Readiness Squadron. During Operation Yankee in 2005, he assisted his team in shipping tons of supply equipment and aid to the victims of Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans. He was promoted to staff sergeant in 2006. His

(See SSgt. Harris, next page)



SSgt. Harris

(Continued from Page 8)

supervisor, Senior Master Sgt. Bill Lynch, described Sergeant Harris as an excellent worker who strives to do every assigned task correctly, but added, “he won’t be mine for long, Sergeant Harris has his sights set on getting into the honor guard full-time.”

Sergeant Harris’ said he was surprised at being chosen as the Honor Guard Member of the Year and had no idea that he had been nominated.

His first experience with a military honor guard was in 1999 at the time his grandfather, an Army Air Corps veteran, passed away. He explained how he came away from the small ceremony attended by only two honor guards who basically only folded the burial flag, and presented it to the family. He thought that the ritual wasn’t appropriate, and felt that there should have been more of a formal ceremony.

After joining the Air National Guard, he renewed his interest in such ceremonies and made a decision to volunteer to join the base honor guard. He said, “I fell in love with the ceremonial duties, I enjoy participating and would like to become a full-time member.”

Over the past year and longer, he has volunteered as a traditional Guardsman to serve with the base honor guard and has participated in more than 30 military funerals, in addition to parades, sporting events, and other public presentations. According to Honor Guard supervisor Master Sgt. John Mallard, “Sergeant Harris considers it a privilege to pay honor to those who served before him.”



Photo by Master Sgt. Wes Smith
Staff Sgt. David Harris watches the New England Patriots cheerleaders at Gillette Stadium in Foxboro.

Quarterly awards

(Continued from Page 7)

as a full-time fifth grade science, math and language arts teacher in the Barnstable public school system.

Sergeant Morassi serves as a trustee on the Board of Trustees for the Barnstable Horace Mann Charter School. He acts as the development and community relations committee chairman, and assists with other committee members in governance and control of the school to ensure student needs are met in a timely, effective and efficient manner.

He also serves as the vice president of the Barnstable Teachers Association, and is active as a member of the Massachusetts Teachers’ Association, Environmental Health and Safety Committee.

Senior Airman Alexis R. Colonna serves the 102nd Fighter Wing, Maintenance Group as a full-time technician, aircraft hydraulics systems journeyman.

According to her supervisors, as demonstrated through her impeccable military bearing and professional conduct, she possesses exemplary leadership abilities. She has earned the respect of her peers through teamwork qualities such as, sharing her expertise, and passing her knowledge

on to younger airmen. She skillfully mentors subordinates by exhibiting loyalty, and a strong work ethic.

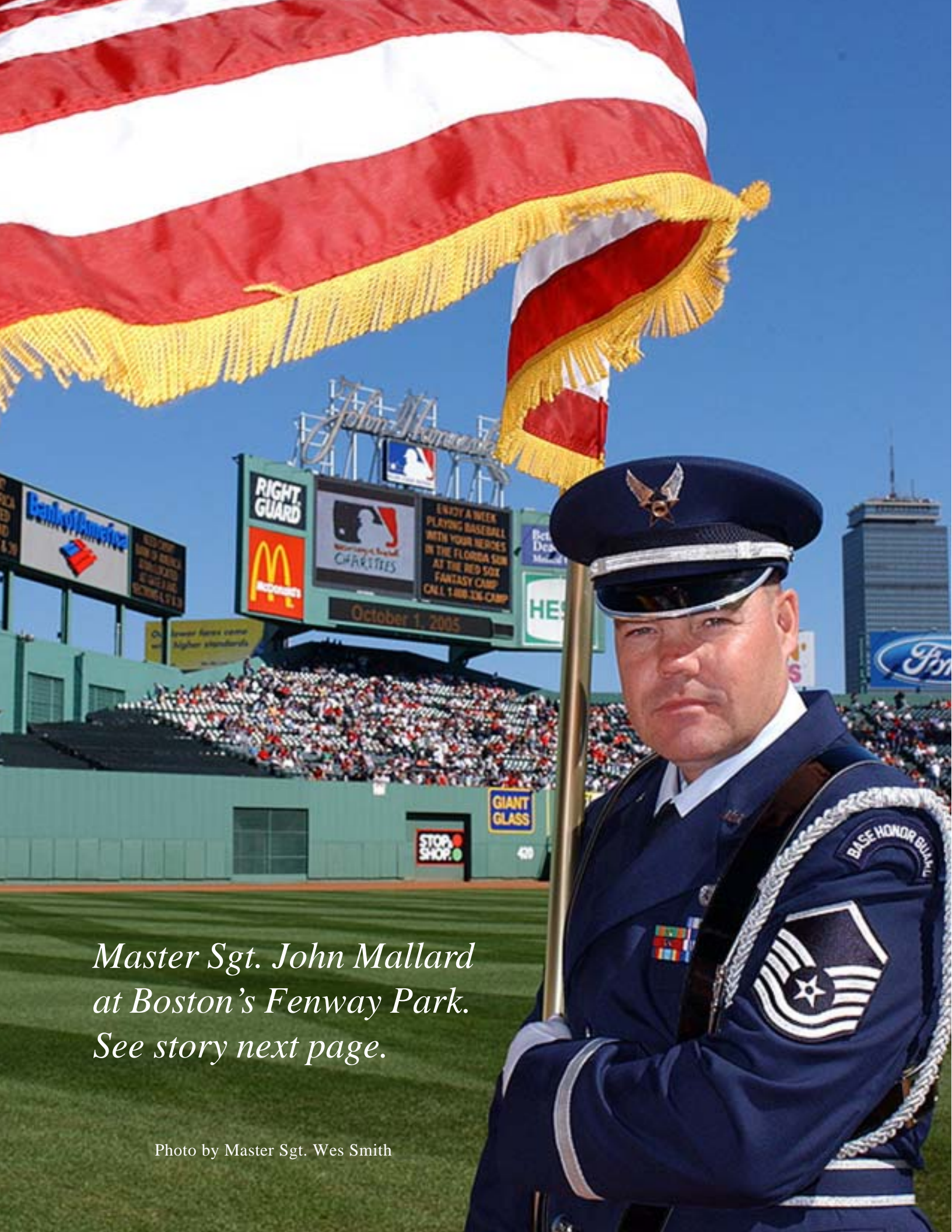
In her section, she has been responsible for updating all of the Accessories Flight’s Material Safety Data Sheets. She also acts as the Satellite Accumulation Point Program monitor, and a member/monitor for the Data Integrity Team for the hydraulic shop.

During the Maintenance Standardization and Evaluation Program Inspection, she assisted other sections on updating their technical orders.

Airman Colonna has earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Biology from the University of Delaware. She is currently working towards a Bachelor of Science Degree in Mechanical Engineering. She is enrolled the Community College of the Air Force, is an honor graduate from Basic Military Training at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, and a distinguished graduate from the Aircraft Hydraulics Systems Apprentice Course at Sheppard Air Force Base, Texas.

The Airman also serves as the Vice President of the 102nd Fighter Wing’s Airman’s Council, and frequently contributes articles for the wing’s Seagull Magazine.

Outside of the wing, at civic events Airman Colonna participates in Revolutionary War reenactments, and coaches local youth in horseback riding.



*Master Sgt. John Mallard
at Boston's Fenway Park.
See story next page.*

Photo by Master Sgt. Wes Smith

Looking for a few good men and women

By **Cliff McDonald**
Public Affairs Staff

How do you get to the parquet floor of the Garden at a Celtics game, take to the field with the Sox at Fenway, be cheered by 68,756 Patriots fans from the 50 yard line at Foxboro's stadium? Practice, practice, practice, or if you want to get there sooner - join the honor guard.

A great seat, and more important an opportunity to stand proud with "Old Glory" at a Patriots, Red Sox, or Celtics game is one of the many perks of being a member of the base honor guard.

Can you believe they actually have vacancies that you might score?

Many of this writers friends are sports fans They attend a lot of home games and know that as the 102nd Fighter Wing's public affairs representative, I have an inside connection to knowing when and who's doing the flyovers and color presentations at local sporting events. They seldom fail to ask me, "are 102nd jets and color guard performing at today's game?" When we are, I'm always proud to tell them so. And proud should be the men and women who wear the distinctive uniform of our unit's honor guard; their labor of devotion and pride never goes unappreciated.

However, if your first interest is in athletics and the celebrity of performing at these events, and not the more solemn duties of honoring service veterans at funerals and memorial services, "then forget about applying," says Master Sergeant John Mallard, the noncommissioned officer in charge of the wing honor guard. He's only interested in you if you are motivated by the tradition of duty, honor and country, and honoring those who came before us.

For Sergeant Mallard there is much more to being an honor guard member than ball games and parades.

Honor guard duty is a means of not letting go of what connects Sergeant Mallard to his proud past as a veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps.

Sergeant Mallard came to the Air National Guard as a veteran Marine; he served 10 years on active duty and three years in the Marine Reserve. Prior to becoming a full time member of the honor guard he served with the wing's Logistics Readiness Squadron, and also as an augmentee for the Security Forces during a personnel shortfall after September 11, 2001. In the spring of 2003 he heard that there was a need for full time honor Guard personnel to assist the active duty with the military funerals honors program. Because he had previously participated in the Marine honor guard program, he saw this opening as an opportunity to do something very meaningful.

Sergeant Mallard feels that participating in the honor guard is his way of showing his appreciation, he said, "I've been wearing a uniform now for 21 years, so for me to be doing this job now

at this point in my career is awesome.

"The military has done a lot for me and my family in the form of structure; it has taught me much. The honor guard is my way of giving back, I just absolutely love it."

Precise drill ceremony movements and flag folding are skills that are not learned without much practice for the members of the honor guard. As part of the preparation for an upcoming ceremony the team practices each movement and then again while Sergeant Mallard, as alert to each movement of his team as a drill sergeant studying the precision of his platoon at full dress parade, instructs each movement until done flawlessly.

Before marching onto the field, or presenting at a funeral ceremony, Sergeant Mallard likes to say, "it's time to hit the switch," meaning to leave all other thoughts behind except the task at hand.

These accomplished team members are confidence in their personal appearance and drill movements; they are at ease with

the awesome responsibility they carry forward into each individual ceremony they officiate.

Sergeant Mallard explained that in the year 2000 Congress passed a law directing the military to provide a military funeral for every veteran who wanted one, prior to this, military honors were only provided

on an as-available-basis. In 2003 the wing honor guard was only doing about five to eight funerals a month, now with approximately 1000 World War II veterans passing away every day, the honor guard averages one funeral a day or about 25 per month. Those numbers over the next 12 years are projected to go up about three percent a year.

There have been so many memorable events for Sergeant Mallard that he has difficulty singling out any one event, but feels that all have been positive for him. He said, "every time it's a different family, but it's usually the same reaction, they are so overwhelmingly proud and appreciative of what we do when we go out there. I can see it when I present the flag to the next of kin, I can see it in their eyes, and I can see how appreciative the family members are at that moment.

"The way I prepare is, at some point in every service I always say to myself, if I do nothing else right today, let it be this. Because I know I need to be the strength for this family today, for right now they are grieving and may not have that strength. They need the honor guard to honor their loved one, to do it proudly and correctly, but also we are the strength that they don't have at that moment. We are there to help them get through that difficult time; it's an awesome thing to be a part of, an absolutely awesome thing!"

There are two full time members in the honor guard program and 20 additional part time volunteers.

"I can see it in their eyes ... I can see how appreciative the family members are at that moment."



Airmen's Council moves forward

By Senior Airman Matt Benedetti, Public Affairs

The Otis Airmen's Council has become a valuable resource for the enlisted members of the 102nd and the 253rd Combat Communications Group. The council provides a forum for enlisted members to discuss issues, solve problems and promote ideas that contribute to the overall quality of life here on Otis Air National Guard Base. As well, the growing organization allows airmen to exercise leadership skills that foster an environment of personal development.

Undoubtedly as the council continues to expand, the objectives will remain constant-taking care of airmen. It is clear that the determined members of the group will continue to diligently pursue initiatives that benefit the personnel of the 102nd.

Senior Airman Alexis Colonna of the hydraulics shop has been an active member and contributes a monthly column to the Seagull. Colonna started attending meetings in January of last year and served as vice president. "The council allows Airmen to demonstrate their leadership abilities and showcase their talents. It provides a forum to discuss issues in a structured but informal setting," she said. "The council serves multiple roles, we provide leadership opportunities, community support and give commanders an idea of the talent in the enlisted ranks," she added. "By being involved in the council, I get a better understanding of my strengths and weaknesses, likes and

dislikes regarding leadership possibilities."

Another factor is being able to work directly with members from other components within the unit. "Getting to know the other members is so important," observed Colonna.

"We worked very hard to establish a foundation for the council," said Senior Airman Maria Escobar, a past president. "We are very proud of creating the sponsorship program that allows new members to become familiar with the 102nd," she added.

One of the many significant accomplishments of the council is the multifaceted website. By featuring a wide range of pertinent information to Airmen, this valuable resource provides airmen with a quick and reliable reference point on a whole host of issues. "The website gives airmen timely information ranging from tips to sitting in front of a promotion board to a rank

The Airmen's Council meets at 1 p.m. hours on Saturday of the UTA weekend in the Executive Conference Room in building 158. The council welcomes interested members of the wing to attend.

progression tool. Tech. Sgt. Suanne Costa did an excellent job in putting it together," said Airmen Escobar. Another popular website feature permits airmen to submit questions to be answered by the council. She added, "If it is a delicate issue we will guide them in the right direction."

During the meetings, every effort is made to adhere to the agenda. "We are careful to stick to the issues so it does not become a complaint session," she said.

The Council members are excited about introducing the *Airmen's Coin*, an unofficial symbol of a job well done.

(See Airmen's council, Page 18)

Milestones

Promotions

To captain
Beth Crouch

To 2nd lieutenant
Jennifer Barry

To chief master sergeant
Jeffrey S. Isch
Peggy E. Timoney

To senior master sergeant
Susan M. Krim

To master sergeant
Mary E. Van Damme
Charles A. Mignault Jr.
Andrea L. Burgo
Michael V. Burman
Joseph D. Pitta

To technical sergeant
Sean J. Italiane

(Continued next page)

Milestones

Sueann Costa
Joseph E. Anteski
John Raphael
Robert Segrin
Christine Torres
Kevin Sullivan
Mark S. Watson
David M. Gomes
Steven Torres
Tabitha M. Gendreau

To staff sergeant

Larry J. Dougher Jr.
Chad L. Correia
Eric Schwinder
Henry Sabens
Christa Osgood
Frederick Ikles
Danillo G. Esguerra
David L. Harris
Mark J. Gregory
Sonia D. Jones
Sharon M. Messina

To senior airman

Kyle A. Kent

Jonathan Fiore
Jamie Green
John McLaughlin
James Hightower
Kevin Teves
Richard Melcher

Welcome Aboard

MSgt. Christopher Reed
TSgt. Stephen O'Neil
SSgt. Salaam Harris
SSgt. Christopher Jensen
SSgt. William Kosky
Senior Airman Randolph Bonin
Airman 1st Class Wallace Musser
Airman 1st Class Brittany Weeman

Stork has landed



Congratulations to Major David Jaffe and his wife, Leslie Kane on the birth of their son Zachary Kane Jaffe.

ESGR Employer Appreciation Day

By Dave St Germain

Executive director, ESGR Massachusetts

Are you a traditional Guardsman, who is having difficulties with your civilian employer in regards to your UTA attendance, annual training, or school participation? Or, do you have an employer who supports your military membership above and beyond what is required by law? Would you like to acknowledge his patriotism? If so, Employer Support of the Guard & Reserve (ESGR) can help. ESGR provides a series of educational initiatives for civilian employers in which we stress the value of your service in the Guard and Reserve to our state, the nation, and even your employer. We invite employers to sign a Statement of Support certificate which reaffirms their support of your military membership and their compliance with the provisions of the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA). Once every year, Guardsmen and Reservists can nominate their employers/supervisors to participate on a Bosslift flight to a military facility, utilizing a military aircraft. We also provide employers with opportunities to visit Guard & Reserve facilities here in Massachusetts.

In the not too distant future, the Massachusetts ESGR Committee will host its fourth annual Employer Appreciation Day. As in past events, we will bring employers of Guard and Reserve members to the Massachusetts Military Reservation and present them with a six hour program that includes briefings and tours with Army National Guard,

Air National Guard and US Coast Guard units, lunch, and an awards ceremony. For additional information and to view photos from last year's event, please visit the MA ESGR website at www.maesgr.org.

This event will occur on Friday, June 1, 2007. If you would like to have an invitation mailed to your employer, please send his or her name, title and business address to Dave St. Germain at the following e-mail address dave2840@msn.com or via phone at 508-994-2476. There are a limited number of persons who will be able to attend, so please submit your nomination in a timely manner. The deadline for submission of names and addresses is April 1, 2007.

Finally, in celebration of Air Force week, the Massachusetts Committee for ESGR will extend invitations to 40 employers to attend a VIP luncheon and view the Air Show dress rehearsal on Friday, August 24, 2007.

So, let us help your supervisor, manager or CEO gain a better understanding of how important your participation in the military truly is! Let us show him, or her, what a valued member of the community you have become because of your military service and training. Take the time to nominate your employer to attend one of these two events.

In conclusion, there is nothing more eye-opening for any employer than to stand next to a runway and watch a flight of F-15 Eagles race down the runway and launch into the sky. Ask any employer who has been to Employer Appreciation Day.... He will agree.

SUNDAY INTERVIEW with SENIOR AIRMAN MATT BENEDETTI

FEATURING STAFF SGT. SARAH PERRY OF THE 102ND MEDICAL GROUP

Staff Sgt. Sarah Perry, a medical administrator with the 102nd Medical Group, served in Iraq from May through Oct. 2006 at Balad Air Base. Trained in medical administration, she admirably performed other critical duties while deployed at the base hospital. One of her chief responsibilities was transporting patients with combat related wounds from the arriving helicopters to the triage area. This demanding role required a calm approach in a challenging and sometimes chaotic environment.

How did you get involved escorting patients to the triage?

“I thought I would be working in medical control which is more of an administrative function. There was a need. I was also responsible for tracking patients throughout hospital.”

What was it like to perform in that capacity and how did you feel the first time you had to respond to the helipad?

“Everyone is nervous the first time but the adrenaline is there and you know that you have to do it. You get out there and you look at everyone’s faces and they all know what to do. You stand there and watch, get in and pull the patient down and lock ‘em in. The patient needs to be treated immediately. You get going. I grew more confident each time and eventually became the helipad trainer. We had periods of downtime but it was usually very busy. We always had to be ready. It seemed to be slower in the day but busier at night. Most days were very busy, in general.”

What were the biggest challenges you had to face in your role?

“Seeing things you haven’t seen before and still being able to function. Most medical people, doctors and nurses, have already gone to school and had experiences that allowed them to ‘turn that switch off.’ In my previous job, I had never known that there was a switch to turn off and be able to function while seeing difficult things. There is and you can.”

Were you surprised how well you were able to perform under this stress?

“I was very surprised how I adapted and glad as well. It helped me assist the patients. We immediately realized the importance of our job. Also, the adrenaline helps you perform with very little sleep, if necessary.”

Did you work well with your group?

“Camaraderie among our group was pretty strong. We were pretty close knit and looked out for one another. We spent a lot of time together and got a chance to know each other. We worked 12 hour shifts and also became close to the Army and Marine LNOs (liaison officers). They are responsible for tracking their patients all the way from the battlefield through



Staff Sgt. Sarah Perry

Photo by Cliff McDonald

medical treatment to home. They also helped us get patients off the tarmac. We got to be friends with them and we all worked well together. The joint environment allowed each branch to bring certain skills to the mission.”

Other than seeing family, what did you look forward to most about coming home?

“Simple things. Nature. Green grass. Rain. That was a big one for me and a lot of my friends because we arrived in Balad during a time it didn’t rain at all. It was a good feeling to come home, sit and watch the rain fall. I appreciate it more now.”

Do you appreciate more things in your life since being deployed?


“I do. I find it a lot easier not to get upset at the small things. I look around and appreciate every little thing that I have.”

Was the threat level high at Balad while you were deployed?

“We experienced a fair amount of attacks. We were well aware of the threat everyday. One attack came within 20 feet of my friend. We heard the impact and responded. She wasn’t injured, just very shaken up. I tried to be there for her and to help her find the strength although I was scared. For her to go to work the next duty day was really tough but she did it.”

Were you ready for the tasks assigned to you?

“I found that I was up for most-for others I needed to adapt. Seeing things I hadn’t seen before was difficult. Being up for doing what I am told, getting the mission done and knowing that we were helping people, that was what I was up for-no matter what that took.”



P-51H-5-NA Mustang, 44-46265 on display at the Octave Chanute Aerospace Museum.

Looking back in the history of the 102nd P-51H Mustang restoration project needs your help

**By Cliff McDonald
Public Affairs Staff**

In 1994, the Octave Chanute Aerospace Museum became the custodian of many static display aircraft following the closure of Chanute Air Force Base, Ill. Among these aircraft, managed through a loan with the National Museum of the United States Air Force, is North American P-51H-5-NA Mustang, 44-46265. Unfortunately, time has not been kind to 44-46265, and the aircraft's rate of deterioration set the stage for potential disaster.

The North American P-51H Mustang was the culmination of a dialogue between North American Aviation and the British to produce a lighter, faster, and more nimble P-51 variant with characteristics not unlike the Supermarine Spitfire. Though similar in appearance to earlier versions of P-51, the H model is an entirely different airplane. The P-51H was almost entirely redesigned to save weight, sharing less than 10 percent of its parts in common with other variants. Perhaps two of the most noticeable H model attributes are the aircraft's smaller main landing gear assembly and increased length.

The P-51H was the fastest piston engine fighter produced during World War II, with a top speed in excess of 480 miles per hour. Though issued to several units preparing for operations in the Pacific, hostilities ceased before the H model saw combat, and once hostilities ceased, so did production. All orders for P-51H Mustangs were canceled, leaving a production run of only 555 aircraft.

In the early throws of the Cold War, the P-51H deployed to Germany and Alaska, and briefly became the long-range bomber escort for the young Strategic Air Command. However, the rapid development of jet fighters, a huge inventory of P-51D aircraft and parts, and questions about durability kept

the P-51H Mustang out of the Korean War and only in scattered deployments with Air National Guard units and occasional odd jobs. By the mid 1950s, the P-51H was no longer in active service.

Built at the North American Aviation plant in Inglewood, Calif., the P-51H, 44-46265 was completed in March 1945, the 105th H model produced. Unfortunately, the aircraft's service record is unclear. Aircraft 44-46265 is thought have served as a pilot trainer at Pinecastle Field, Fla., prior to transfer to Chanute Field in 1946. The aircraft was used as an airframe repair and maintenance trainer at Chanute until 1949 when it was retired. From November 1951 to July 1954, 44-46265 was put back into service with the 101st Fighter Squadron, 102nd Fighter Wing of the Massachusetts Air National Guard, but from here, the trail grows cold. Aside from its return to Chanute Air Force Base, little else is know of 44-46265's history.

Decades of exposure to the elements and limited maintenance has taken a horrible toll on 44-46265. Vandals and birds had also left their defacing marks. In October 2003, The Mustang Restoration Project was established by Norm Meyers, a devoted and dedicated volunteer, at OCAM to conserve, restore, and maintain P-51H, 44-46265, and to preserve its history and heritage for future generations. Aircraft 44-46265 is truly a rare bird, being one of only six still known to exist.

Unlike many other warbird restoration projects, this project does not have large corporate sponsors or benefactors. The entire project is financially supported by a very small portion of the museum's budget and the contribution of private donors and sponsors. For a project that could easily run in the \$100,000s, finances are tight. However, the project progresses because of

(See Mustang, Page 17)

The American Red Cross Needs Our Help

By Senior Airman Matt Benedetti,
Public Affairs Staff

There is no greater pain in life than watching a loved one suffer. Everyday thousands of families in Massachusetts must confront the burden of a family member with cancer, leukemia or a related disease.

Patients suffering this type of illness must undergo chemotherapy as a part of their treatment, often leaving them weak. Subsequently, when the blood is not working properly due to the chemotherapy, the body does not produce platelets.

Platelets are small, colorless, irregularly-shaped bodies that are present in the blood. Their sticky surface allows them to form clots to stop bleeding. Platelets play a vital role in the prevention of blood loss. When the lining of the blood vessel is traumatized, platelets are stimulated to go to the site of the injury where they form a plug that helps reduce blood loss. Platelets are a life saving therapy for patients undergoing chemotherapy for cancer, leukemia, bone marrow transplants, organ transplants and open heart surgery.

In a weakened state, the patient must receive frequent platelet transfusions to avoid serious side effects.

Platelet donation can help alleviate the pain of these afflictions and directly contribute to the recovery of the patient.

Diane Donnarumma, recruit representative with the American Red Cross, spoke to the command staff of the 102nd on Jan. 16, 2007 to ask wing members for assistance. Diane was the special guest of Col. Paul Worcester and was grateful to address the group. "The Red Cross understands the impact



Guard members have in our communities. We have a real need for platelet donations and we immediately thought of the Guard," she said.

"The need for platelets is very high. Hospitals require a constant supply because they only have a shelf life of five days," said Donnarumma.

The Red Cross has a long established relationship with the military. Often acting as a liaison for families and military members on active duty, the Red Cross has provided comfort to countless families. By donating platelets, Guardsmen can give back to an organization that has traditionally demonstrated good will towards the military.

Almost anyone can be a platelet donor and the qualifications are the same as for whole blood donations. The process is very safe and takes approximately 90 minutes.

Col. Worcester is very familiar with platelet donations. "I started donating platelets more than thirty years ago to get over a fear of needles. Little did I know what life-saving impact they had on those in need especially the children with leukemia. I'm smarter now and my fear of needles is gone. If I can do this, anyone can. Give it some consideration please. How you feel after donating will convince you it was well worth it" said Worcester.

Please consider donating platelets. Contact the donor center in Raynham at 508-977-0201 or Diane directly at 781-710-2450— DonnarummaDi@usa.redcross.org. There are several donor centers located in Eastern Massachusetts if Raynham is not convenient.

New Web site helps search for uniform ideas

By Staff Sgt. C. Todd Lopez
Air Force Print News

WASHINGTON (AFNEWS) — Airmen will soon have a new avenue to make suggestions for Air Force uniform design and wear.

This spring, the Air Force plans to bring online a new Web tool called "eUniform." The site will allow Airmen to submit their suggestions about uniform issues directly to Air Force Uniform Board members."

This is really an effort to simplify the uniform board and suggestion process," said Capt. Patrick Barger, with the Air Force uniforms programs branch. "This will allow the Air Force to save money, and at the same time, make the uniform-board process more accessible to all Airmen."

Sometime around March or April, Airmen will be able to log in to the eUniform Web site through the [Air Force Portal](#). After inputting information such as their name and

unit, they can enter in detail their suggestions for uniform design and policy changes. Their suggestions must meet the approval of both their base and major command uniform-board representatives. If the suggestions clear those hurdles, they will go before the Air Force Uniform Board.

"Using the eUniform Web site will allow leadership to get a better sampling of how Airmen feel about the uniform and Air Force wear policies," Captain Barger said. "We think Airmen are more likely to log in to this Web site to share their ideas than they are to participate in a conventional, paper-based suggestion process."

The eUniform site does more than just collect, collate and archive every uniform suggestion made by Airmen.

The site also allows members of the uniform board to collaborate virtually when deciding what suggestions will be submitted for review to the Air Force chief of staff.

Major Ray Wetmore Remembered

By Senior Airman Matt Benedetti, Public Affairs Staff

This month 56 years ago, Otis Air Force Base lost one of its most highly decorated pilots in a plane crash in south Sandwich. Maj. Raymond Wetmore, the commander of the 59th Fighter Squadron here at Otis and a World War II fighter ace, was killed when his F-86 Sabre crashed during the last leg of a return flight from California.

A legendary figure in the European Theatre of Operations, he served as a fighter pilot for 30 months and received numerous decorations including a Distinguished Service Cross with one cluster, a Silver Star with one cluster, a Distinguished Flying Cross with five clusters and an Air Medal with 12 clusters, as well as many other awards.

Wetmore, a resident of North Falmouth, served in Europe with the 370th Fighter Squadron and scored his first four victories in a P-47 Thunderbolt. He became a 20 year-old ace while flying a P-51 Mustang, downing two German Messerschmitt Me-109s. By the end of the year, he had 15 kills while flying a P-51 dubbed "Daddy's Girl" and was promoted to captain. He finished the war with 21 kills and attained the rank of major at just 21 years old.

Remarkably, Wetmore managed to shoot down a Messerschmitt Me-163 (Komet), a rocket powered jet developed by the Luftwaffe. This prototype jet initially baffled the Allied pilots of traditional propeller planes like the British Spitfire and American Mustang.

Operating around Berlin on March 15, 1945, he spotted two Me-163s and closed to 300 yards. He was amazed as he watched one of the rocket-fighters zoom upward. He followed as close as he could and at 20,000 feet the Komet's engine flamed out. The Me-163 dived with Wetmore on his tail and he opened fire at 200 yards. The strikes chopped away part of the German's wing and the pilot took to his chute.



Maj. Raymond Wetmore

Wetmore was 27 years old when he died, leaving a wife and 4 children. He was the highest scoring ace in the 8th Air Force during 1945. Although his brilliant career was cut short, he is not forgotten by the members of the Otis Air National Guard Base.

Mustang

(continued from Page 15)

the leadership, dedication, and hard work of Meyers and his equally dedicated and hard working volunteer collaborators Curt Arseneau, Ralph Mercier, Neil Madden, and Neil Jacobs.

Great strides have been made in restoring 44-46265. The aircraft was first thoroughly cleaned and assessed. Among the debris removed was a sizable quantity of bird nesting material and various bits of trash. The mechanical systems of 44-46265 were found fairly intact, but the cockpit was almost entirely gutted and the canopy badly damaged. Work currently in progress includes the repair and refurbishment of the wing tips and gun bays, but the largest undertakings are the restoration and refurbishment of the cockpit and Packard-Merlin 1650-9 V-12 engine. Thousands of hours have already been invested in 44-46265, and thousands more are needed. The work on the cockpit includes fabricating miss-

ing instrument panels and components, and the Merlin was painstakingly disassembled, cleaned and preserved and re-assembled. Other major tasks waiting in the wings include the procurement and installation of an undamaged canopy and fresh paint.

The North American P-51H Mustang is a brief and often overshadowed chapter in the history of aviation, but the work of museum to preserve 44-46265, the story of the P-51H, and the people, organizations, and culture associated with them will continue. The goal is to provide future generations the opportunity to experience this remarkable aircraft, and glimpse the people who built them, flew them, and maintained them.

If you are willing to share photographs, information, experiences, or memories concerning P-51H, 44-64265, or P-51H Mustangs in general, please contact Norm Meyers (p51h@insightbb.com), or Mark Hanson (curator@aeromuseum.org) at the Octave Chanute Aerospace Museum, 1011 Pacesetter Drive, Rantoul, IL 61866; (217)-893-1613.

State awards

(Continued from Page 6)

achusetts Air National Guard's "Outstanding Airman of the Year 2006." It's been a very busy year for this Airman who had previously been selected as both, Airman of the Year and Military Person of the year at wing level competitions, and promoted to the rank of staff sergeant.

Sergeant O'Leary is assigned as an intelligence operations journeyman with the 102nd Operations Support Flight where he is praised for his excellent job performance, outstanding professional knowledge, leadership abilities, and self improvement efforts. Sergeant O'Leary provides the wing commander and staff with monthly intelligence briefings. He is a distinguished graduate of the F-15 Intelligence Formal Training Unit "Top Off" Course, where he earned a 96.5 grade point average and was lauded as a "best briefer" and "top performer."

In 2005, Sergeant O'Leary earned a bachelor's degree in criminal justice from Bridgewater State College, he is currently pursuing a master's degree, also in criminal justice, from Suffolk University. For more information on Sergeant O'Leary, see Seagull editions, Oct.-Nov. 2006 and Dec. 2006.

The "Senior Noncommissioned Officer of the Year Award" for the Massachusetts Air National Guard is given to a Guardmember who demonstrates exceptional expertise, professionalism, and advanced skills in their job, while supporting the mission of the Air Force. Master Sergeant Mark Swanton of the 102nd Maintenance Group competed against the best senior NCOs from throughout the state, and now he's formally recognized as the state's top ANG NCO for 2006.

Sergeant Swanton is assigned to the Maintenance Group where he works in the Aerospace Ground Equipment Shop as an equipment craftsman, and supervises shop personal in the absence of the shop NCOIC.

According to Sergeant Swanton's shop supervisor, Senior Master Sgt. Tom Rudzik, "his 26 years experience level is continually utilized by others concerning equipment troubleshooting, training, and overall shop knowledge. His abilities, talents, and personality have contributed to making the shop the very best."

Sergeant Swanton has devised a simple and cost effective solution to an Air Force wide problem with the self-generating nitrogen cart. He has submitted an Air Force suggestion form and plans to share his idea with Guard functional manag-

ers for a complete fleet wide repair.

He is a resident of Plymouth along with his wife, Barbara and their two children, Linsay and Sean. For more information on Sergeant Swanton see Seagull edition, Oct.-Nov. 2006.

Staff Sergeant William Alexson, is the Massachusetts Air National Guard "Noncommissioned Officer of the Year 2006." He is assigned to the 102nd Security Squadron as a response team leader.

With Sergeant Alexson's success this year, you'd like to say to say this Guardsman isn't just up-and-coming anymore, you could say he's arrived - except for one thing. He's got his sights set on advancing all the way and becoming a commissioned officer. Cadet Alexson is currently attending Cape Cod Community College and is participating through a "cross-town program" in the Air Force Reserve Officers Training Program at Boston University.

For more information on Sergeant Alexson see Seagull edition, May 2006.

Staff Sergeant David Harris was selected to represent the Massachusetts Air National Guard as the Honor Guard Member of the Year for 2006. For more on Sergeant Harris, see the article, Honor Guard not for everyone, page 8.

Airmen's council

(Continued from page 12)

This coin is presented by an enlisted member of the wing to another enlisted member in recognition for superior performance in their respective duties. For example, if an airman continuously goes above and beyond their scope of official duties to assist wing personnel, that person can be nominated for the coin.

"The coin nomination process gives airmen a chance to vote for a supervisor or colleague and brings attention to someone that might not seek it," said Airman Escobar "Also, the recipient's supervisor will be notified and that could trigger further acknowledgement," she continued. "The coin awards initiative and lets Airmen recognize one

another."

The Otis Chiefs Council has been supportive and has provided funding for the creation of the coins. Chief Master Sgt. Roy Piver has been very impressed with the organization. "It is gratifying to see the progress made by the Airmen's Council. In less than three years, the council has gone from the conceptual phase to the implementation of a charter under which all future councils will operate. The officers and members of the council have shown a level of maturity and dedication that we should all emulate," said Piver.

"It gives me confidence to know that the future of our wing is in their capable hands and I could not be more proud of their accomplishments," lauded Chief Piver.

Chapel Call

Chaplain
(Capt.) Mary Scheer



Valley of Decision

As of Saturday, February 10, Parish, N.Y. had received 8 feet of snow with the possibility of another 2-4 feet. This has prompted folks to share their, "I remember the blizzard of...stories." Some of you may have your own "blizzard" story, or hurricanes, tornadoes and such. We're familiar with the damage caused by blizzards, fires, hurricanes and even a tsunami, but it can be hard to imagine something like a plague of locust.

In 1899 a swarm of locust crossed the Red Sea covering some 2000 square miles. The prophet Joel tells of a time there was a swarm so large it blotted out the sun and stripped every living plant to the ground where they passed causing unprecedented destruction.

After the cutting locusts finished eating the crops, the swarming of hundreds of millions of locusts took what was left stripping everything. All the grape vineyards were ruined. Like a terrible army, too numerous to count with teeth as sharp as the teeth of lions, they destroyed all the grapevines and fig trees, stripping the bark, leaving the branches white and bare. There was no grain or wine, no olives or oil. The farmers were in despair, no wheat, no barley, their crops were ruined. No pomegranate trees, no palm, or apple trees, all the fruit trees dried up and all joy had dried up with them. There was nothing anyone could do; they were helpless to stop the insects. They watched as their food disappeared before their very eyes. No seeds would grow in the parched ground, the grain crops for the coming years would fail, their barns and granaries were empty and abandoned. The animals wandered hungry and confused because there was no pasture for them. There was a terrible drought even the streams dried up. (summary of Joel Ch. 1)

Bewildered and shocked, having lost everything to the locust, the people wanted answers. They wanted to know what to do next. How would they live and work, how would they eat, what should they do? Standing in a valley, surveying the damaged landscape, the Prophet Joel says, "Hear this you leaders of the people! Everyone listen! In all your history, has anything like this ever

happened before? In fact it had, but they had forgotten. He asked the question to remind them that they had been through difficult times before and had gotten through them just as they would again this time.

Joel gathers the folks in a valley and tells them that they are in a valley, at a real low point and the way up and out begins with some decisions they have to make. Joel calls this place of trial, judgment and difficulty the "valley of decision."

On a trip to visit my sister in Colorado, I was on both a mountain top and a valley in the same day. They are very different experiences. Valley's and mountains have different views and vantage points and they are navigated differently. Depending on external circumstances, time of day, location, conditions, preparedness and provisions, valley's can be scary. It can feel like we're alone with everything looming above us. It can be hard to see what lies beyond the immedi-

ate; vision is limited by angle and perspective, making it hard to see the way out. Decisions about the next step can be difficult, in the valley.

Yet many of life's most important decisions happen in the valleys or low points. Times of crisis can also be the most delicate times for faith testing what we believe about God and about ourselves. Some come through difficult times with their faith stronger than ever, while others become so disappointed in God that they walk away from their faith. Faith always requires a decision and most decisions require faith!

What we believe shapes our outlook, it shapes our story and how we tell it. What we believe about ourselves, about our future guides our steps and choices. Regardless of the kind of valley we may find ourselves in, we will have decisions to make. In those times, remember who you are and what you're capable of, find higher ground and a new vantage point. Changing your view and perspective inspires creative thinking and problem solving. Remember the good times, consider the bad and have faith in the future and Joel encourages us to remember God and pray for He is a mighty fortress, a stronghold in the day of trouble.

**"Faith always requires a
decision and most decisions
require faith!"**

Call signs

Sign, sign, everywhere a sign

By Senior Airman Matt Benedetti,
Public Affairs Staff

Names like *Catfish*, *Mutha* and *McGoo* may sound like a group of kids choosing sides to a stickball game but actually represent the call signs of the highest trained personnel in the U.S. military. The peerless confidence and steadfast character of fighter pilots is often *not* reflected in their call signs. In fact, call signs commonly emerge from an amusing anecdote or inside joke not forgotten by his comrades.

Call signs are a unique designation for a transmitting station or to identify each individual pilot. For example, the most recognized call sign is Air Force One, used when any aircraft is transporting the U.S. President.

Although the origins are unclear, most data suggests that this tradition can be traced back to the earliest fighter pilots. Call signs became increasingly popular during World War II and are universally accepted rites of passage for today's USAF fighter pilots. Unlike Navy pilots, Air Force pilots do not use call signs in flight to communicate; however, on base, each pilot's call sign becomes an unofficial title and is frequently more recognized than their birth name.

There is no specific formula for choosing call signs but they often underscore the fraternity and camaraderie apparent among this gifted group.

"Typically, call signs are prevalent in the fighter community more so than in the airlift or helicopter units. They are very much a tradition among fighter pilots and are generally given to you at your operational unit when you become fully mission capable," said Col. Anthony "Kimo" Schiavi, vice commander of the 102nd Fighter Wing. "Like it or not, your call sign sticks with you. The call sign you want the least is probably the one you end up with," said Colonel Schiavi.

Lt. Col. Jim "Flav" LeFavor, also an F-15 pilot and a flight commander, explains that the process is distinct at each base, "It is a rigorous two year process to become

a pilot and every squadron is different relative to naming call signs," he said. F-15, F-16 and A-10 squadrons all have their own method regarding this rite of passage.

"The actual event when a pilot gets his new name often occurs on a Friday or Saturday evening over a few beers. We sit around and tell stories and usually a guy who runs the process goes into the history of the unit. The ritual is somewhat structured to avoid chaos. We discuss actions that he may have done, some flattering, some less so," said Colonel LeFavor. Last names or physical characteristics could also be a source for determining a nickname.

"We compile a list of potential names then go into the ceremony. We ask the guy if he has any preferences or any previous call signs he would like to keep. As soon as he opens his mouth, we tell him to shut the hell up. People continue to tell stories and we start scratching off the names and that discussion could last for hours," he said.

This selection process ultimately winnows the potential call sign to three names. "We bring the guy in and show him the names and take the final vote. Once it is decided, our tradition at the 102nd is to have him eat an egg including the shell, symbolizing the unborn eagle," Colonel LeFavor said. After consuming that delicacy, the new pilot downs a shard of beer, unofficially becoming a member of the unit.

Colonel LeFavor recalled several amusing names from his active duty days. "While stationed in Kadana, Japan we called a guy 'Snap' which stood for 'sensitive new age pilot, a name that was coined after he was discovered washing dishes during a party," he recalled.

Another guy was called "Wedge" because that is the simplest tool in the box.

At the 102nd we have a few pilots with memorable call signs. Lt. Col. Kenneth "Jethro" Lambrich earned his nickname due to his rural Tennessee roots. Maj. Daniel "Nasty" Nash got his moniker because of the official Nash. D. on the flight roster. And, obviously his compassionate demeanor and nurturing attitude are reflected in Maj. Andreas "Mutha" Jucker's call sign.

Despite the occasionally unflattering nicknames hung on each flyer, the pilots of the 102nd possess a strong bond. The call sign represents a spirit of lightheartedness in a profession that can be intense, challenging and dangerous.

The three rules of call signs:

1. If you don't already have one, you will be assigned one by your "buddies."
2. You probably won't like it.
3. If you complain and moan too much about 1 and 2, you'll get a new nickname you'll like even less!

So, how do you get a call sign?

Do something stupid or have it fit with your last name. Obvious examples, 'Crash' or Lt. 'Cheese' Kraft.

Red Sox Report

By Senior Airman Matt Benedetti



Sox poised for big year

Pitchers and catchers have reported to spring training at Fort Myers, FL to begin the unofficial start of the 2007 baseball season. This annual harbinger of spring will undoubtedly lift the spirits of New Englanders after a long winter.

The Red Sox have undergone a significant off-season restructuring and the faithful may need a scorecard to identify several members of the new club. **Trot Nixon**, a cornerstone of the team since 1996, was not resigned and will be a member of the Cleveland Indians in 07. Nixon, who personified the tenacious attitude of the successful teams of the late 90s and 2000s, was considered too injury prone by the Sox brass. Curiously, General Manager **Theo Epstein** and Co. signed free agent **JD Drew**, a talented but moody outfielder on last season's Dodgers, to play right field at Fenway. Drew has been a productive left handed hitter throughout his National League career but is no stranger to the disabled list. As well, his previous stints with the Braves, Cardinals and Dodgers earned him a reputation as a gifted outfielder but indifferent teammate. Nixon was a #1 draft pick of **Lou Gorman** in 1993 and had been steady presence throughout his career in Boston. It remains to be seen how the move will play out, but Nixon's hustle and determination will be missed on Yawkey Way.

Another acquisition is the Japanese import, **Daisuke Matsuka**. The much publicized and expensive signing underscores the need for an ace on the aging and uneven Boston staff. **Josh Beckett** won 16 games but control problems, a 5.01 ERA as well as propensity to give up the long ball, diminished his effectiveness. Matsuka, 28, considered the best pitcher in Japan, will play an important role for Sox manager **Terry Francona**. **Curt Schilling** and **Tim Wakefield** have reached 40 and showed signs of fatigue last year. They can no longer be expected to shoulder the burden of pitching the majority of innings in the starting rotation. Matsuka's unorthodox delivery promises to keep American League hitters guessing for the first half of the season. After the All Star break, AL hitters will be prepared and Matsuka's subsequent adjustments, will determine his level of success.

Julio Lugo will play shortstop and has a long way to go reach the proficiency of **Alex Gonzales** at this critical position. Gonzalez' range and deft ability at short allowed Sox pitchers to breathe easier knowing that a double play would be turned whenever possible. Lugo is a better hitter but not in the same class of fielder

as Gonzales. Also a Dodger free agent, Lugo previously played for Houston and Tampa Bay. **Mark Loretta**, a free agent not resigned, has been replaced at second base by **Dustin Pedroia**, a much heralded Sox prospect. Solid and productive, Loretta provided steady leadership to last year's squad. The promotion of Pedroia could signal that in the future, the team is looking within for talent rather than via trade.

Several Sox prospects have become prominent National League players in recent years. Pittsburgh's **Freddy Sanchez** won last year's NL batting title, Florida's **Hanley Ramirez** won the Rookie of the Year and **Anibel Sanchez** threw a no hitter. San Diego right-hander **Cla Meredith** set a scoreless innings streak and the Cubs' slugging outfielder **Matt Murton** is poised for a big year.

All were traded by Sox in an effort to bolster the club's immediate post season chances at the expense of developing talent for the long term. **Jeff Suppan**, **Josh Beckett**, **Mike Lowell**, **Orlando Cabrera**, **Doug Meintkeiwicz** and **Doug Mirabelli** were the principal players acquired by the Sox in those deals dating back to 2003.

Bosox trivia

1. The Sox traded two right handed pitchers to the now defunct Montreal Expos in 1997 for Pedro Martinez. Carl Pavano was one, can you name the other?
2. Dwight Evans played an expert, gold glove right field for the Sox during an 18 year career that ended in 1990. He was picked up by another American League team for one unremarkable year. Can you name that team?
3. The Red Sox have 'retired' four numbers in their long history barring any other Sox player from wearing them. The retired numbers are 1, 4, 8 and 9. Can you name the players that wore them?

Send answers and feedback to matthew.benedetti@maotis.ang.af.mil at the Sports Desk. Correct answers win the latest copy of the Seagull and a fleeting sense of accomplishment.

Youth coordinator expands teen programs

By Erin Creighton, Family Program Coordinator

In December 2006 we welcomed Maura McGowan Yanosick aboard as our new child & youth coordinator for the Massachusetts National Guard Family Program. Many exciting activities for Guard Youth are already being planned and we would like to include YOU in the planning process!

Along with maintaining our already existing youth programs such as the Youth Club, the Gear Up Teen Leadership Program and Operation Youth Deployment, Maura has added one new component to our youth program: Peer Leadership Program. P.A.L.S. (Participate-Ask-Learn-Support) as the graduate course of the Gear Up Program and is an excellent way for you to be an active member of our Guard family!

Most high schools now require community service hours as part of their graduation requirements and many college applications contain an area for community service documentation. Certificates and documentation will be awarded for all hours volunteered. Become a member of the Guard youth P.A.L.S. Peer Leadership Program and satisfy your high school community service hour requirement!

Many opportunities are available to our Guard Youth P.A.L.S. Peer Leaders including: staffing at Operation Guard Youth Deployment Days, Gear Up Teen Leadership and Gear Up Jr. conferences, acting as a Youth Club Liaisons, participating in the Guard Teen Panel and more...there are even opportunities to represent Mass. Guard teens at both the state and national levels!

Massachusetts National Guard Dependents between the ages of 13-18 years, who have completed the Gear Up training, can be a Guard Youth P.A.L.S. Peer



Maura McGowan Yanosick

Leader! Just complete the application and return it by mail or fax. If you are not yet Gear Up certified but would like to be, or would like to participate in the many National Guard youth programs please contact either Erin Creighton, 102nd Fighter Wing family program coordinator 508-968-4855 erin.creighton@maotis.ang.af.mil or Maura McGowan Yanosick, child and youth coordinator directly at 508-233-7290 maura.m.yanosick@us.army.mil

Join the Guard Youth Program, make a difference in the lives of Guard youth and have fun in the process! Remember: Together we can do great things!

Tax Assistance Center Open at JFHQ

Starting on 10 JAN 07 the JFHQ Tax Assistance Center is offering free electronic tax filing & form preparation as part of the IRS-sponsored Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program. This free service is open to all active-duty and guard service members, retirees, and military family members.

Anyone who has questions or problems completing their income tax return due to combat zone deployment should contact the JFHQ Tax Assistance Center, where IRS-trained personnel prepare both federal income tax forms and state returns in these situations.

These services are in great demand; you are encouraged to email now to guarantee availability. The Tax Assistance Center can be reached by email at MA-taxes@ng.army.mil

Taxpayers can also call the IRS for answers to federal income tax questions and to order federal in-

come tax forms at 1.800.829.1040. Federal income tax forms, publications, and instruction booklets are also available at www.irs.gov. IRS Publication 3, *The Armed Forces Tax Guide*, is available through the Tax Assistance Center and online at www.irs.gov. Additionally, most state tax authorities also maintain an Internet website where a taxpayer can obtain state income tax forms and publications.

Liberty Tax Service is offering discounts to military members.

If you were deployed in a tax-free status for at least 30 days, your tax preparation is FREE. All other active duty personnel there is a 50% discount on tax preparation services.

Visit www.libertytax.com for more information or call 1.866.871.1040.



New England Corvette Club "Vettes & jets"

**By Cliff McDonald
Public Affairs Staff**

The New England Corvette Club, based in southeastern Massachusetts, drove to Otis Air National Guard Base this past October. NECC member Lt. Col. Wayne Theroux planned the visit.

The colonel arranged for the club to have access to the flight line where two F-15 Eagle fighter jets were parked nose to nose.

Club member Paul Pearson worked with President Bill Reynolds to produce a "seating chart" that arranged 18 club cars in an attractive pattern in front of the jets. The oldest cars were placed in front, with the newest cars making up the back row.

Working with clockwork precision, the members moved

their Vettes into place for the individual photos of their autos with the jets, and then out of camera range to allow the next vehicle to move up. In two hours, between 850 and 1,000 photos were taken. Some of these have been posted on various Corvette forums and on the Club web site at www.newenglandcorvetteclub.net

The grandson of members John and Carol Baldi brought his Corvette, a battery-powered child's car in bright yellow! He posed with his vehicle in front of the jets as proudly as any adult member did.

The Corvette club is appreciative of the reception accorded by the 102nd Fighter Wing. Otis Guardmembers made the Corvette club members feel welcome throughout the entire time spent on base; the club "salutes them and the work they do!"



*Tyler Currier, grandson of
John and Carol Baldi*



*Lt. Col Wayne Theroux and his
wife, Janet.*

Cape Cod Airshow

U.S. A.F Thunderbirds



Massachusetts Military Reservation

August 25 and 26, 2007

The United States Air Force Air Demonstration Squadron, "Thunderbirds" has been inspiring the young, instilling confidence in the old and making Americans proud of their Air Force since the first demonstration more than 47 years ago. Watching a "Thunderbirds" performance provides a small glimpse into how more than 360,000 Air Force professionals perform everyday. This year, the Thunderbirds will again bring the U.S. Air Force to audiences in around the world, displaying the pride, precision and professionalism of the men and women serving in today's Air Force. The team will perform at the Cape Cod Air Show on Otis Air National Guard Base, Aug 25 and 26.

Seagull

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