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Vol. 31, No. 9

# On-final

## Training Like They Fight: An ORTP Recap

### **PLUS:**

- 35th Combat Comm Represents AFRC In Germany
- Wing Commander, Local Mayor Trade Jobs For A Day
- Retirement Ceremony Turns Into Surprise Reunion
- Father And Son Enlist In Reserve Together
- Wing Names Quarterly Award Winners

# A journey to strength by Airman 1st Class Crystal Charriere 419th Fighter Wing Public Affairs



It's been one year since I was stranded on the side of the highway with a dead-end job and no money for school or gas. As I sat in my car waiting for my ride to show up, I realized I wasn't going anywhere, and it wasn't only because my gas tank was empty.

I pictured myself as a stronger person when I graduated high school, but I was dependent on my parents, my friends, and my job, which was just a job, not a career.

One of my high school teachers would start class each day by writing a quote on the white board. Among those quotes, Ralph Waldo Emerson's words stayed with me: "Nothing can bring you peace but yourself."

To live up to that quote I had to change. I wanted to become someone I would admire instead of someone I pitied. I needed to toughen up and find my purpose.

After searching for a way to revolutionize myself, I found the Air Force Reserve and realized it would give me all the tools I needed to become a better version of myself. I'd be educated, gain skills and experiences I never could have on my own, and I'd have the opportunity to serve my country. That was a career I could take pride in.

I left for Basic Military Training in May. Military boot camp was something I never thought I could do, and never wanted to do. But there I was on a plane to Lackland Air Force Base for nine weeks of push-ups, cleaning M16s, and marching - the first steps to transforming into a more empowered individual.

On the first night in training one girl cried. After seeing her, I decided I wouldn't cry, and I never did. Some people need to cry to grow stronger, but I felt it wouldn't change anything or even make me feel better. To me, crying meant I wasn't trying hard enough. I was there to strengthen myself.

My Military Training Instructor, Staff Sgt. Mathew Oleson, helped me do that. I'll never forget what he did for me. During those nine weeks while he was yelling at us, marching us around the base and training us, he instilled the greatest sense of pride and dignity in me. He expected nothing less than perfection.

I only screwed up once, but when I did, Sergeant Oleson made the entire flight do push-ups. That sucked, but it wasn't what affected me most. Sergeant Oleson said that I had embarrassed him. Those words played over and over in my head all night, and I almost cried. Almost.

Then one afternoon before chow I was taking my M16 apart, and Sergeant Oleson saw me. As he walked down the aisle to his office he muttered, "Charriere's a killer." I grinned

from ear to ear. I like to think that in those brief seconds I made him proud. That was always my goal in BMT. I wanted my instructor to be proud to have me as his trainee. I wanted him to stand in front of me on graduation day, hand me my Airman's coin and really mean it when he said, "Congratulations, Airman."

In July I became an Airman in the United States Air Force and was no longer the girl stranded on the side of the highway with no career and no direction. It's as if I unlocked part of myself that was lying dormant my entire life. I achieved something I didn't think I was strong enough to do.

It's been a year now, and I'm closer to the person I want to be than ever before. I have my own apartment. I'm back in school, and I'm an assistant photo editor in my civilian job. I have an awesome public affairs career with the Air Force Reserve, and I'm fortunate enough to be serving my country for the next six years, and I'm on the road to becoming who I want to be. I will never regret my decision.

## On the cover...

Chief Master Sgt. Tina Long (bottom left), 507th Air Refueling Wing command chief, observes bunker guards while taking shelter after a simulated mortar attack at her work center during an Operational Readiness Training Preparation Exercise on August 7, 2011 at Volk Field Combat Readiness Training Center, Wisc. The 137th and 507th Air Refueling Wings trained for an Operational Readiness Inspection scheduled for next year. Read about ORTP 4 on pages 6-13.

(Photo by Master Sgt. Roberta Thompson, 137th Air Refueling Wing)



# Education will take you places

by Capt. Omar Villareal  
8th Fighter Wing Public Affairs  
Kunsan Air Base, South Korea



With the current military tempo, it would seem safe to say that by joining the military, new Airmen will be able to see the world.

I have known many people who have joined to get away, to see new places, to expand their understandings and to gain independence.

I decided to join the Air Force because I wanted to follow the footsteps of a proud Airman who served more than 24 years for his country. That proud Airman was my father, who, along with my mother, stressed to me the importance of education.

I never was the studying type. I figured there were so many other things I would rather be doing, but because of my parents, I knew education could help me grow as a person.

“Education can take you places,” my parents would say. “Go to school, stay on top of your studies, work hard, believe in yourself and the rest will be history.”

I was commissioned nearly eight years ago, after four extremely fun years at the University of Texas at San Antonio. I am sure there were those who doubted I would be able to finish because I had a full plate. I worked full-time, I ran cross country, I was in ROTC and I was in a fraternity.

“Most people can only work and go to school, or have a so-

cial life and go to school,” a school administrator said during an orientation a week before my first semester. “We advise you to choose what you want to do and stay away from the other.”

I am here to tell you that no matter how much you have on your plate, no matter how long it has been since you have taken your last class and no matter how hard you think it will be, there is always a little room for higher education. Putting forth just a little amount of effort is all that is required to succeed.

As service members, we have tools at our disposal to help us get an education. We have an education center. We have tuition assistance. We have leaders who understand the value of a higher education; and if we are away from our families, we have the opportunity to get one or finish one we have already started.

The education center is there to help service members reach their educational goals. The education center is there to help with what probably is the hardest part about getting a higher education: registering for that first class. Once you register, you are well on your way to achieving the degree you seek.

So, with the tools available to each of us, there should be no reason for not pursuing a higher education, right? Well, that is up to us to apply the values instilled in each of us: Integrity First, Service Before Self and Excellence In All We Do.

I think we owe it to ourselves to improve who we are. I can honestly say that I believe most service members strive to be model citizens. We want a higher rank, we want more responsibility and we want to live the best life possible.

I am not going to convince you to go register for a class, buy a textbook or take the first step and visit your base’s education center to by writing this commentary. Getting an education is something you have to want to do for yourself.

All I am asking is that you take a second to think about the opportunities you have. As service members, we have opportunities that most only dream of. Want better for yourself? Get a higher education and go farther than you ever thought possible.

For information on how you can take that first step, visit your education center or log on the Air Force Portal and visit the Air Force Virtual Education Center.

## On-final

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*All photographs are Air Force photographs unless otherwise indicated.*

# Wing civil engineers redeploy from Silver Flag training

by Lt. Col. Richard A. Curry  
507th ARW Public Affairs Chief

TINKER AIR FORCE BASE, Okla. — Thirty-five members from the 507th Air Refueling Wing's Civil Engineer Squadron redeployed September 4 from Tyndall Air Force Base, Fla., after attending a two-week long training course.

The Silver Flag Exercise Site 68-person cadre provides combat support training to active duty units, the Air National Guard, Air Force Reserve Command, Army, Marine Corps and military forces of allied nations. During the five and one-half day primary course, services, civil engineer and personnel support for contingency operations (PERSCO) personnel learned how to build and maintain bare-base operations at forward-deployed locations. Students honed a variety of combat and survival skills, such as repairing bomb-damaged runways,



setting up base facilities and disposing of explosive ordnance.

More than 5,600 people are trained each year at the site. Services members received additional training on providing food service

and lodging under simulated wartime conditions, while PERSCO members received training on accounting for deployed forces, processing casualty reports and conducting personnel sustainment actions.

Over the years, training has expanded to its current program, which includes force bed-down, advanced base recovery after attack, disaster preparedness, fire protection, explosive ordnance disposal, food service and lodging skills, chemical warfare operations and personnel accountability.

The training is essential to maintaining a fine edge to the wing's civil engineer members who have repeatedly deployed to the Afghanistan and Iraq in support of Operations IRAQI FREEDOM and ENDURING FREEDOM. More than 40 civil engineers deployed last summer to Afghanistan. They also deployed in 2008 and 2006 on similar missions.

## 507th MDS Airman dies in auto accident

by Tech. Sgt. Zach Jacobs  
507th Air Refueling Wing Public Affairs

TINKER AIR FORCE BASE, Okla. — A funeral service was held September 1 for an Airman from the 507th Air Refueling Wing.

Senior Airman Justin M. Smith, a medical technician with the 507th Medical Squadron, died in a car accident in the area of Southeast 149th and South Douglas streets in Oklahoma City on August 27.

Smith was a sophomore at the University of Oklahoma, where he studied to be a nurse anesthetist.

Wing officials said Smith was an integral part of the 507th Medical Squadron team.

They said his expertise resulted in the medical team's sustained excellence and high performance to consistently exceed its monthly goal to complete 150 physical examinations.

Officials added that Smith's professional and sincere approach and sense of urgency were essential in meeting both home and deployed warrior requirements.

Smith was chosen as the real-world medic for a recent deployment exercise, supporting two combined wings of 600 Airmen.

He participated in trauma patient care training during a recent annual tour at Osborne Medical Center in Scottsdale, Ariz.

Smith is survived by his father, Master Sgt. (ret.) Robert Smith, of Tuscon, Ariz.; his mother, Master Sgt. (ret.) Lisa Dennison of Oklahoma City; and his brother, Airman Joshua Smith, of Oklahoma City.

A memorial is scheduled for Saturday, September 10 at 9 a.m. in the Tinker Air Force Base medical clinic's Heritage Hall.



▲ Senior Airman Justin M. Smith, pictured here in his high school senior photo in 2008, died in an accident on in Oklahoma City on August 27. His funeral was held September 1.

# Combat communicators integrate Total Force in Germany

Story and photos by Capt.

Timothy Spink

35th Combat Communications Squadron

TINKER AIR FORCE BASE, Okla. — More than 30 members of the 35th Combat Communications Squadron represented the 507th Air Refueling Wing and Air Force Reserve Command during the Total Force Combat Communications Exercise 2011 at Ramstein Air Base, Germany, July 8 through 21.

TFCOMEX 11 brought together combat communication units from the Air Force's active duty (1st CBCS, Ramstein's host unit), the Air National Guard (236th CBCS, from Hammond, La.), and Air Force Reserve (35 CBCS) components for a seldom-exercised Hub-Spoke satellite-linked configuration.

The technical feasibility of doing a Hub-Spoke mission using the Air Force's new Everything over Internet Protocol (EoIP) standard had only recently been proven by the 3rd Combat Communications Group (also located at Tinker) in March, and this was the first opportunity to integrate all three Air Force components together, training as they would fight — a Total Force using the same communications standard.

"I am proud of how each and every one our Airmen performed," said Maj. Monte Buchanan, commander of the 35th CBCS. "Our Airmen continually impress me; they maintained their positive attitudes and high morale from mission start to the end.

"We did what we came to do, and that was to train. Not only were we able to train our Airmen and prepare them to do their real-world jobs, but we were also able to provide training to the DoD STEP site," added



▲ (Left to right) Tech. Sgts. Christopher Franklin, Phu Pham, Thomas Thompson and Michael Elliot and Staff Sgt. Dustin Baca assemble a satellite terminal.

▼ Master Sgt. Aaron Smith and Senior Airmen Janet Wise (front center), Jacob Graham (middle center), Cathryn Jones (rear center) and Nichole Ketchum prepare equipment for return.

These and other Airmen from the 35th Combat Communications Squadron represented the 507th Air Refueling Wing and Air Force Reserve Command at the Total Force Combat Communications Exercise 2011 at Ramstein Air Base, Germany, July 8 to 21, 2011.



Buchanan. "The mission was a resounding success."

The exercise's scenario called for limited bandwidth across DoD's network entry points, requiring AF Forces Command HQ (supported by 35 CBCS) to act as a hub for two geographically-separated spoke sites (1 CBCS and 236 CBCS), providing the spokes with non-

secure computer networking and Defense Switched (telephone) Network by satellite, while also extending the same services to another site using wireless Radio Frequency equipment.

The 35th's achievements went beyond simply proving their equipment's technical capabilities. With only eight percent of the unit being full-

time reservists, the 35th CBCS's traditional reservists were the driving force during the five-month mission planning sessions, engineering the network architecture for each squadron participating in the exercise. During the operations period, all but three of the team were TRs, highlighting once again the effectiveness of a professional Reserve component.

Some success stories included:

- Proving the unit's capability to rapidly deploy and redeploy 36 passengers and 42 short tons on 16 pallets into and out of a distinctly unique theater of operations,

- Smoothly integrating Total Force personnel into the daily operations and maintenance activities of 1st CBCS' power production and supply sections,

- Increasing AFRC's expertise on DISA's host base security suite through formal classroom training,

- Sharing critical technical feedback directly with AF-level program managers regarding their \$27 million equipment suite, and

- Successfully qualifying six power production personnel on required training for the Mobile Aircraft Arresting System.

Upon receiving accolades from both the 86th Airlift Wing's vice commander and the 1st CBCS' commander, Buchanan summed up the exercise by saying, "The unit's professionalism and technical expertise shined through.

"Their adaptability in executing a robust EoIP mission — even more incredible knowing that most Airmen had no more than 40 hours experience in operating the equipment — is an outstanding preview of what is to come in future operations, exercises, and inspections."

# 'TRAINING THEY FIGHT'

1



2



3



**FROM THE DEPT.  
THE 507TH AND 13  
STOR**

# LIKE GAT



**LOYMENT LINE TO THE CHOW LINE,  
37TH ARW'S TACKLE ORTP 4 HEAD-ON  
BY TECH. SGT. ZACH JACOBS**

The Airmen sighed as they fanned their faces with their hats and wiped layers of sweat off their brows.

Dog tags hung about their necks, making distinct jingling noises as their owners shuffled uncomfortably in their cargo net seats along the inner walls of the stifling hot KC-135 Stratotanker aircraft.

Some of the Airmen clutched bags containing personal gear, while others cradled M-16 and M-4 automatic rifles in their arms.

Some shared jokes and chuckles amongst the cramped cargo area, but the majority of them remained stoic and sullen.

Those not plunged into jokes, phone apps, iPods or paperbacks were slouched forward or leaning back with eyes closed in an attempt to squeeze a few more minutes of sleep out of an already long day; one that, for some, began at 1:15 that morning.

Regardless, each passenger on board was simply doing his best to take his mind off the heat: not only the temperatures inside the aircraft, but also those at their final destination.

All at once, a mechanical beep sounded from the cockpit, followed by a thumbs-up back to the cockpit from an equally sweaty Airman clad in a thick flight suit.

The plane began to taxi out to the runway, and although taxiing took no longer than five minutes, the sweltering aircraft temperature and the sardine-style seating of nearly four dozen Airmen in a Stratotanker made the trip to the runway seem like a short eternity.

Suddenly, the pilot and co-pilot revved up the plane's four engines and released the brakes, thrusting the aircraft forward and causing a simultaneous lean to the rear for most of the Airmen in the plane.

And after a few minutes in the air, blessed relief hit these



▲ Tech. Sgt. Jeremy Murphy, 137th ARW, and Senior Airman Tyler Sorrels, 507th ARW, water sweep a simulated fire. PREVIOUS PAGES: (1) Cadres set off smoke bombs to represent a chemical attack. (2) Staff Sgts. Allen Manley and Matthew Dillion of the 137th ARW enter a simulated burning building to search for casualties. (3) Senior Master Sgt. Dennis Sanderson of the 137th ARW provides self-aid and buddy care to Senior Airman Matthew Pearsall of the 507th ARW during a mock attack. (4) Master Sgt. Jerry Caughman of the 507th ARW threads tent flaps together in preparation for the stand up of their “Bug Out” location. (5) Cadres Tech. Sgt. Boyle and Master Sgt. James Wilbanks observe as Master Sgt. Corey Still wraps Master Sgt. Eric Whitsel’s arm during a Self Aid Buddy Care refresher training class. Still and Whitsel are both from the 507th ARW. (6) Staff Sgt. Rachael Haggard of the 507th ARW guards a building entrance. (Photos by Master Sgt. Roberta Thompson)





▲ **Tech. Sgts. Troy Chaddon and Bryan Scagnett and Airman Josiah Talley of the 137th ARW, Senior Airman Mark Peralta, of the 507th ARW, and Tech. Sgt. Christopher Rackley of the 137th ARW pass sandbags to help build a hardening shelter around their work center.**

▲► **Airman 1st Class Amanda Brummell from the 137th ARW and Tech. Sgt. Allen Hackenboch of the 507th ARW build a hardening shelter around their work center. (Photos by Master Sgt. Roberta Thompson)**

Airmen from the 507<sup>th</sup> Air Refueling Wing as the plane's altitude dropped the cabin temperature by nearly 30 degrees.

But their airborne air conditioning gave way a brief period later to another scorching runway on another military installation in another hot climate.

The aircraft touched down, and the Airmen off-loaded hundreds of bags in a "daisy chain" line with typical military efficiency, amid blazing sunshine and sweaty faces.

And after a short trip to a nearby hangar, local personnel greeted them with smiles, bottles of ice-cold water and a hearty "Welcome back!"

This trip wasn't to an austere location in support of a military operation. After nearly a week of mid-summer training at the Combat Readiness Training Center at Wisconsin's Volk Field Air National Guard Base, these Airmen flew back home to Tinker Air Force Base, Okla.

**I**t's not common for the Air Force's primary mid-air refueling aircraft to fulfill a cargo transportation capacity. But the 507<sup>th</sup> and its associate unit, the Oklahoma Air National Guard's 137<sup>th</sup> Air Refueling Wing, sent equipment, supplies and more than 560 of their Airmen to Volk Field for the fourth final phase of their Operational Readiness Training Period, or ORTP 4, on their own aircraft.

Lt. Col. Ken Humphrey, the chief of plans for the 507<sup>th</sup>, said ORTP was designed to develop operational readiness for a wing.

"This ORTP process was developed by the Volk Field Contingency Response Training Center, along with the 22nd Air Force," said Humphrey. "The 22nd Air Force was trying to develop some sort of method for training their troops, bringing them up from Ground Zero all the way up to the point where they are operational ready and will do very well on the ATSO [Ability to Survive and Operate] phases as well as all other phases of a deployment during an inspection."

And the planners of ORTP 4 tried to make the whole trip

as much like a true deployment as possible. Most of the Airmen arrived on Wednesday, August 3; a few flew in on C-5 and C-17 cargo aircraft, but the majority of them touched down in KC-135s.

Each Airman packed multiple uniforms, "battle rattle" (to include a web belt, canteen and cup, flashlight, flak vest and helmet), a gask mask and additional Mission Oriented Protective Posture overgarments -- known as "MOPP gear" -- in backpacks and "A-Bags." Some of these bags weighed more than 50 pounds each.

Additionally, some Airmen had to bring their own professional gear with them from their original duty sections -- ranging from small office supplies to laptop computers -- because there was no equipment available at Volk Field for them to perform their duties.

These Airmen spent the first three days of the trip in preparatory courses. The preparation included classes on familiarization with weapons; chemical contamination avoidance; gas mask and chemical equipment fitting and familiarization; and self-aid buddy care, or SABC.

Subject matter experts, or SMEs, taught these sessions in classrooms or sometimes outdoors, depending on the sizes of those assembled to train. One course, for instance, consisted of two trainers instructing nearly 50 Airmen on how to inspect gas masks and how to properly (and most quickly) don the masks and other chemical warfare gear.

But the SMEs weren't the only ones to be inspected. Cadre from other installations -- active duty, Reserve and Air National Guard alike -- served as oversight inspectors for the SMEs, ensuring the procedures and methods being taught to the mock deployers were taught by the book.

The final two days consisted of the actual deployed location training, with scenarios ranging from chemical attacks to building fires to missile strikes to actual fires for firefighters to extinguish.

And several times over the base-wide public address system -- known as the "giant voice" -- the calls for MOPP Level 4

rang out, calling for all participating Airmen to don their full compliments of chemical gear, from gas mask to rubber boots.

Realistic situations and realistic training, indeed.

**V**olk Field was originally developed in 1888 as a rifle range for training for soldiers in Wisconsin. By 1903, the camp had grown to more than 800 acres in size, due in part to the state legislature's purchase of 600 acres of land adjacent to the original camp site. Camp Williams was the name given to it in 1927, the year after the death of the camp's chief quartermaster, Lt. Col. Charles R. Williams.

As the nation's military recognized the importance of air power, the installation's first hard runways were constructed in 1935, and by 1947, the Wisconsin Army National Guard had moved their training to nearby Fort McCoy and the state's Air Guard had commenced annual training at the installation. In 1957, Wisconsin's state legislature renamed the post to Volk Field in honor of 1st. Lt. Jerome A. Volk, the first Wisconsin Air Guard pilot to lose his life in the Korean War.

And since 1990, when Volk Field was designated as an ANG Combat Training Readiness Center, it has played host as a training installation to active-duty, Guard and Reserve units from across the nation.

**O**kies and Sooners, as the reservists and guardsmen, respectively, are called, took to the base in early August to train and prepare for their operational readiness exercise, or ORE, coming up in March.

And for many an Okie, it was the first time to work side-by-side with a Sooner. But it was very important to do so for many reasons.

Roger Kubilis, a staff sergeant with the 507<sup>th</sup> Logistics Readiness Squadron, said ORTP 4 was a "build up to the big show," meaning the ORE.

"The best part of ORTP 4 was getting to know the guardsmen," said Kubilis, adding that it helped build cohesion between the Okies and Sooners.



▲ The Okies' legacy logo shown here was placed on a set of aircraft stairs on the main runway. Units from all over the country have made their marks at Volk Field by affixing their logos to various places across the base. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Zach Jacobs)



▲ Airmen arriving at and leaving Volk Field did so in "chalks, grouped together by chalk in sections like this before it was time to go."

**F**ood was, obviously, no small part of ORTP-4. Airmen enjoyed various hot foods, fresh fruit and dairy products for breakfast and dinner, prepared and served by services specialists in Volk Field's DFAC.

Staff Sgt. Jose Montero, a services specialist with the 507<sup>th</sup> Force Support Squadron, said his time spent working in the dining facility, or DFAC, was a good experience.

ORTP 4 taught Montero "how with one [duty section on a deployment] missing, none of [the exercise] would be successful."

The most memorable part of ORTP 4 for Montero was "knowing you fed everybody as best you could."

But MREs – also known as Meals, Ready to Eat – were the main course of fare for lunch each day, and they ranged from lasagna to chicken fajitas to vegetarian, kosher or halal meals for those with special dietary considerations.

And favorite items in the MREs were the sweets, like pound cake and muffins. But other Airmen also enjoyed the sports drink mixes and even beef jerky.

**A**s training wound down and redeployment efforts began, the thoughts of many on the final flights home turned to the heat, but also to life back home.



” or groups. Their baggage flew with them, as well, and was me to depart. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Zach Jacobs)

Chief Master Sgt. James Young, the chief enlisted manager for the 507<sup>th</sup> Civil Engineer Squadron, said his biggest priority once he got home was to watch his son on the first night of his football season and to watch his daughter take part in cheerleading.

Montero said he was going to take his family out to dinner as a way to “thank them for letting me be able to come out and support” ORTP 4.

Clevenger’s plan for his first actions upon returning home was simple: “I’m going to kiss my wife and daughter.”

And Bourquaye said that after two weeks of planning, preparation and work for ORTP 4, she planned on taking a hot shower and catching up on sleep in her own bed.

Although the training in Wisconsin gave the Okies and the Sooners a reprieve from the blazing Oklahoma heat for a few days, they truly earned their reprieve from training in their return home.

*Special thanks to 1st. Lt. Jessica Chapa, Master Sgt. Roberta Thompson and Senior Airman Patricia Baker, public affairs professionals from the 137th Air Refueling Wing, for their teamwork, professionalism and generous contribution of photos and information to this report.*

► Airmen filled pillowcases with other issued bed linens and MREs to give to Airmen of the 507th and 137th Air Refueling Wings at the lodging office during the first day of ORTP 4. Airmen ate hot meals for breakfast and dinner during ORTP 4, but took MREs to their duty sections for lunch each day. (Photos by Tech. Sgt. Zach Jacobs)



▲ Senior Airman Christopher LaPlante of the 507th ARW lies down for a few minutes of sleep. Many Airmen, like LaPlante, while awaiting the time for their respective departure chawks, caught up on sleep when and where they could. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Zach Jacobs)

## BY THE NUMBERS

**560+:** Officer and enlisted personnel in training at Volk Field

**100+:** Cadre personnel

**10:** Separate aircraft flown (6 KC-135 Stratotankers, 2 C-130 Hercules, 1 C-5 Galaxy and 1 C-17 Globemaster III)

**12,000+:** Miles flown by aircraft

**4,400+:** MREs issued

**40:** Average pounds of equipment worn or carried by an Airman

# R C L E R

## WING COMMANDER, LOCAL MAYOR C STORY AND PHOTO BY M

TINKER AIR FORCE BASE, Okla. -- A military commander and a city mayor got to experience a day in the life of the other recently.

Col. Jeffery R. Glass, commander of the 507th Air Refueling Wing, and Mr. Randy Ross, the mayor of the city of Choctaw, Okla., observed each other's jobs August 24.

As part of the Tinker Air Force Base, Okla., Community Star, or COMMSTAR, program, Tinker's organizational commanders are paired up with community, civic and business leaders in the local area for an entire year.

Ross said he and Glass were teamed up in February after Ross hosted a function at a Choctaw restaurant for Tinker's leadership in late 2010. Ross said he was approached by a COMMSTAR member who asked if Ross had ever been in the program. After replying no, Ross said he received an application shortly thereafter.

During the year, Tinker's commanders and their COMMSTAR partners took part in various events, ranging from various base function tours to Tinker's annual COMMSTAR flight on August 11-12.

This flight involved 27 COMMSTAR partners and six military escorts flying from Tinker to Florida, where they got to tour Hurlburt Field and Tyndall and Eglin Air Force Bases.

But this brief job orientation project was an enlightening experience for both Glass and Ross.

When he's not serving as the mayor of Choctaw, which he's done for 5-1/2 years, Ross serves as the executive director for the Oklahoma Accountancy Board.

Ross said the OAB is responsible for



▲ Col. Jeffery R. Glass (left), commander of the 507th Air Refueling Wing, describes wing's subordinate units in Glass' office at Tinker Air Force Base, Okla., on August 24, 2011. Ross, mayor of Choctaw, Okla., is COMMSTAR, military-civilian relations program and spent the day learning about

the registering, licensing, monitoring, testing and discipline for public accountants in Oklahoma.

But Ross said he had served at several other Oklahoma state agencies and got to show Glass those jobs, as well as his duties at the OAB.

"Colonel Glass not only got to see

what I do at the accountancy board, but a number of other areas in state government that I had worked at previously," said Ross. "We toured a print shop, our state surplus operation which has just about everything you can think of that is sent from all agencies in the state.

# EVERSAL

## GET GLIMPSE OF EACH OTHER'S JOBS TECH. SGT. ZACH JACOBS



**ibes to Mr. Randy Ross, mayor of the city of Choctaw, Okla., the hierarchy of the 24, 2011. Glass and Ross were paired up as partners for Tinker's Community Star, and each other's primary jobs and responsibilities. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Zach Jacobs)**

"Additionally, we were able to look at the facilities maintenance area that maintains all of the buildings in the State Capitol complex and see all of the really cutting edge sustainability projects that are being implemented."

Glass said the green projects the state put on were incredible, adding that the

entire morning was very interesting.

Glass said he "got a great insight to what's going on in the state."

That afternoon, Glass got to show Ross around the 507<sup>th</sup>, enlightening him on the aircraft and non-aircraft aspects of what goes into making the wing work.

Glass gave Ross a tour of the main portion of the wing and its facilities, including the fabrication shop, the fitness center and the main hangar, where Ross got to see a KC-135 Stratotanker aircraft up close and personal.

Ross' impression of the wing was an astounded one.

When asked what he learned the 507<sup>th</sup> that he didn't know before you joined the COMMSTAR program, Ross expounded about the details.

"It is all of the little things that are done by everyone to keep the war fighters going," Ross said. "The details that have to be done and done right to make all of the operations function properly were really eye opening."

"It really makes you proud of what our Air Force does and all of the personnel that work in unison when you see it. The quality of the people is outstanding."

Glass also appreciated what the COMMSTAR program did for civilian partners.

"I think the best part of the COMMSTAR program is getting them to know what we do at Tinker," said Glass. "This is the first year that we've really got a chance to go see what the civilian partner does in their lives, so I thought it was great."

"It really gives the COMMSTAR partner a good idea of what the various units do at Tinker."

Glass has been a COMMSTAR participant for his tenure as commander of the 507<sup>th</sup>, more than five years, but said this year was different.

"This is the first time I got to see what my civilian COMMSTAR did for his employment," said Glass, "so it was really enlightening today."

# 507th MXG Airman's retirement includes surprise ending, reunion

Story and photo by  
Lt. Col. Richard A. Curry  
Chief, 507th ARW PA

TINKER AIR FORCE BASE, Okla. -- A retirement ceremony held here August 6 turned into surprise homecoming moment for a former 507th Air Refueling Wing Airman.

Master Sgt. Wayne L. Ellison, 507th Maintenance Group, was retiring after 30 years of service.

Ellison's son, Jay, is a sergeant in the Oklahoma Army National Guard. Unfortunately, Jay had recently deployed and was stationed in Afghanistan. According to 507th MXG officials, Wayne Ellison had originally wanted to wait until his son was home from the war before he retired. And although Jay had requested leave, it was denied; so it appeared that Jay would not be able to return to the United States until next year.

While Wayne was disappointed, he accepted the facts and gave up on the idea of having his son present for his retirement. So he decided to schedule a date for the ceremony.

What he didn't know is that once he confirmed his retirement date and his unit had received the official order, Ellison's co-worker, Master Sgt. David Wallis and his supervisor Master Sgt. Johnny Baker began to coordinate with Jay Ellison via e-mail.

Wallis said, "I was e-mailing with Jay and his wife since the middle of July. He asked for leave and the Army finally granted it.

"He almost didn't make it because his flight got pushed back. He arrived a couple days prior to the retirement ceremony so that worked out great," added Wallis.

"Nobody in his family knew he was going to be here except for his wife," Wallis said. With their help and the help of Jay's wife, the surprise was kept a secret from the entire family.

The retirement began with the welcoming of guests and the official presentation of the Air Force Meritorious



▲ Oklahoma Army National Guard Sgt. Jay Ellison (left) chats with his father, Air Force Reserve Master Sgt. Wayne Ellison, during a retirement ceremony on August 6, 2011, at Tinker Air Force Base, Okla. The senior Ellison retired from the 507th Maintenance Squadron after having served 30 years in the Air Force. Ellison received a surprise visit from his son, Jay, who had been given special leave to attend the event. Jay was in the middle of a deployment to the Southwest Asia theater. Jay's return allowed him to present a retirement flag to his father. Jay is pictured holding his son, Langston, who was only 71 hours old when Jay deployed overseas.

Service Medal, in recognition of Ellison's most recent accomplishments in support of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM.

Then, once the official retirement citation was read and his wife received recognition for her contributions to his career, it was time to receive a retirement flag.

Ellison's commander, Capt. Michael Maule, then announced, "Master Sergeant Ellison, on behalf of the 507th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, please accept this flag in grateful appreciation of your faithful and dedicated service from our special guest, Sergeant Jay Ellison, United States Army."

The puzzled look on Wayne Ellison's face soon changed to one of happiness

as he realized his son was walking across the room towards him. They hugged each other amid a roar of applause and exclamations of joy from those assembled.

"I had a lot of thoughts and memories going through my mind during the ceremony," said Wayne Ellison. "So when the captain said Jay's name, it really didn't register at first. I really didn't hear what he had said. I was completely surprised to see my son standing there."

"I was so happy Jay was able to come back for my retirement," Wayne said after the ceremony ended. "It meant so much to me for him to be able to take part in this."

# Like reservist father, like reservist son

Oklahoma Air Guard civil engineer, 17-year-old son join Reserve together

by Tech. Sgt. Zach Jacobs  
507th ARW Public Affairs

Master Sgt. John Schulze, a heavy equipment specialist, just joined the 507th Civil Engineer Squadron.

And, sometime next year, his son Ryan will join him.

Father and son raised their right hands and repeated the oath of enlistment in a ceremony at the Pawnee, Okla., veterans' memorial on August 21, enlisting in the Air Force Reserve together.

And for the father, it marked not only a transition to the Reserve, but also "going the long way around to spend time with your kids," he said.

"It makes me proud," said John about his son's enlistment. "It's exciting that he'll be the third generation in a row that's [in the] military."

And it's not just military service, but service in the Air Force, that's continuing in the Schulze family. Both of Ryan's grandfathers served in the Air Force.

Ryan's maternal grandfather, James Lee, is an Air Force veteran of the Vietnam War. And Milton Schulze, John's father and Ryan's grandfather, served as a B-25 flight instrument mechanic in the Army Air Corps in World War II.

And Milton made it to the ceremony, as well. John said his dad was glad to see the enlistment.

John said his father "wasn't a 'lifer,' but he thought it was great that we were passing along the generations there."

John, an information technology specialist at Oklahoma State University



▲ (Left to right) Master Sgt. John Schulze, Ryan Schulze, Army Lt. Col. (ret.) Craig Ellis and Dr. Milton Schulze (front, seated) pose at the Pawnee County, Okla., veterans' memorial.

▼ (Left to right) Ellis swears John and Ryan Schulze into the Air Force Reserve.

John, a master sergeant in the Oklahoma Air National Guard, joined the Air Force Reserve the same time as his son, Ryan, who joined the Air Force Reserve's Delayed Enlistment Program on August 21, 2011. After Basic Military Training and technical training in 2012, Ryan will join his father at the 507th Civil Engineer Squadron. (Photos kindly given by Master Sgt. Tony Anderson)



in Stillwater, spent the first six years of his Air Force career in active duty before transitioning to the Oklahoma Air National Guard, where he served for more than 14 years.

And he was the one to make the choice to transition to the Reserve, but the plan for both father and son to join the Reserve was one they had talked about for a couple of years.

John said he wanted to enlist together with Ryan to "get him started before I retire at some point." John said he also hopes to deploy with Ryan, too.

Ryan's still a senior at Woodland High School in Fairfax, Okla., where he's participating in two sports and serving as the vice-president of his school's Future Farmers of America chapter.

But that doesn't mean he's waiting to begin his college education. Concurrently enrolled at Northern Oklahoma College and Oklahoma State University, Ryan's earning college credits while he's finishing up high school.

John said Ryan's ultimate goal is to finish his Fire Protection and Safety Technology degree at OSU, while working toward his commission through OSU's Air Force ROTC detachment to eventually become an active duty Air Force officer.

But Ryan's career will start like his father's did, with attending Basic Military Training at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, in May. Ryan will then attend electrical technology training at Sheppard Air Force Base, Texas.

After his training ends, Ryan plans to begin Air Force Reserve duty as an electrician attached to the 507th Civil Engineering Squadron here.

And although it's an unusual way for a father and son to spend time with each other, John says serving in the Reserve is something he and Ryan can do together.

# 507th ARW names quarterly award winners

Story and photos by Tech. Sgt. Zach Jacobs  
507th Air Refueling Wing Public Affairs

Two Airmen from the 507th Maintenance Squadron and one from the 507th Civil Engineer Squadron were recently named the top junior enlisted, NCO and senior NCO for the 507th Air Refueling Wing for 2011's third quarter.

Senior Airman Keia N. Albright, a knowledge operations management specialist with the 507th Maintenance Squadron, was selected as the 507th Air Refueling Wing's Airman of the Quarter for the third quarter, 2011.

A member of her squadron for only four months, Albright was praised by her commander as a "go-to" knowledge specialist for her assisting an administrative Airman in a sister squadron. Albright also restructured a disarrayed supply system for five maintenance flights in her squadron, which eliminated lag time on accessibility for squadron inventory.

Albright was also responsible for loosening more than \$37,000 in Reserve command funds, by way of composing 25 individual annual tour "in-lieu-of" letters and coordinating them for approval.

In addition to enrolling in the Air Force NCO Academy ahead of her peers and aggressively pursuing her craftsman classification, Albright established a structured physical training regimen for three senior NCOs for an upcoming Fit to Fight test.

Tech. Sgt. Brian D. Holmes, a nondestructive inspection (NDI) journeyman with the 507th Maintenance Squadron, recently garnered NCO of the quarter honors for the third quarter, 2011.

Holmes restructured process controls with an NDI program office, saving 10 hours of additional labor per week. He also helped prevent a potentially catastrophic event by identifying and determining damage limitations for a cracked KC-135 Stratotanker boom fork.

Holmes developed a plan for NDI inspections, completing them during the first four days of an isochronal, or periodic, assessment; this plan reduced isochronal time by more than 53% over the prior two assessments.

Holmes completed 120 college credit hours toward an aerospace logistics degree, maintaining a stellar 3.97 GPA. He also was inducted into the prestigious Phi Kappa Phi academic honor society for his efforts.

Senior Master Sgt. Jodie D. Schaefer, the operations management superintendent for the 507th Civil Engineer Squadron, was named the senior NCO for the 507th Air Refueling Wing for the third quarter, 2011.

Schaefer secured mission readiness for her squadron by identifying and closing more than 30 Management Internal Control Kit checklist deficiencies. She also reduced wasteful spending in her squadron by more than 20 percent using a detailed assessment of unit financial accountability.

Schaefer jump-started the Prime Base Engineer Emergency Forces program, contributing to her squadron's unit compliance inspection success.

While earning 81 credit hours toward her bachelor of arts degree in organizational management and maintaining a 4.0 grade point average, Schaefer volunteered with the Central Oklahoma Start! Heart Walk, helping to raise more than \$764,000 to fight heart disease.



▲▲ Senior Airman Keia Albright, ▲ Master Sgt. Brian Holmes and ▼ Senior Master Sgt. Jodie Schaefer are the Airman, NCO and SNCO, respectively, for the 507th Air Refueling Wing for the third quarter 2011.







THE SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE  
CHIEF OF STAFF, UNITED STATES AIR FORCE  
WASHINGTON DC



September 1, 2011

To the Airmen of the United States Air Force:


September 11, 2011, marks the tenth anniversary of the terrorist attacks that claimed the lives of nearly 3,000 innocent people—at the World Trade Center; at Shanksville, Pennsylvania; and at the Pentagon—and affected the lives of countless others across our great country, and beyond. In all, ninety countries lost citizens, and people the world over would condemn these acts of terrorism.

This tragic event altered our view of the world and sparked a global effort to combat terrorism and the conditions that give rise to extremism. We are proud of the international efforts that have led to the capture or killing of many of the terrorist leaders, but our success has not come without significant cost. As we reflect on the horrific day that marked the beginning of our struggle to better secure the world from these threats, we honor the tremendous selfless service that today still distinguishes American Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, and Coast Guardsmen, comprising the most dedicated, professional, and powerful military force in the world. We also recognize that the need for sacrifice is not over.

We sincerely thank you and your families for what you have done for your country to date, and thank you in advance for bravely facing our future challenges. Please take a moment this day, to reflect on the tragic losses of September 11, 2001, as well as the losses and wounds that we have suffered in our campaign to maintain security for our Nation since that fateful day. Today we also remember the families and friends of the lost and wounded, who bear the heaviest burden, whose loneliness we seek to ease, and whose sacrifice we hold in the highest regard.

  
Michael B. Donley  
Secretary of the Air Force

  
Norton A. Schwartz  
General, USAF  
Chief of Staff

  
James A. Roy  
Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force

# Officials: no changes to military retirement system on horizon

by Jim Garamone  
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON (AFNS) — The military retirement system isn't going to change any time soon, a Defense Department official said recently.

Navy Adm. Mike Mullen, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said any changes to military retirement should be studied carefully and should be "grandfathered" so the military doesn't break faith with those in the service.

Pentagon officials are reviewing all areas of the defense budget, and the goal of the review is to "inform the decisions and strategies that we have to make," Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta said Aug. 4.

"So that's going to be key to what decisions we make

and what areas we look to for savings," the secretary added.

In support of the department's efficiency initiatives, a small group of Defense Business Board members was tasked to develop alternative plans to the current military retirement system. The group briefed its findings and draft recommendations to the full board during their July 21 quarterly meeting. The full board approved the recommendations, and the group will issue a final report by the end of this month.

The Defense Business Board provides DOD's senior leaders independent advice and recommendations "on effective strategies for the implementation of best business practices on matters of interest to the Department

of Defense," according to Pentagon officials.

However, officials are reviewing the board's recommendations, said a Pentagon spokeswoman.

"Any recommendation to change the military retirement system must be approached with thoughtful analysis, to include considerations of impacts to recruiting and retention," Eileen Lainez said. "While the military retirement system, as with all other compensation, is a fair subject of review for effectiveness and efficiency, no changes to the current retirement system have been approved, and no changes will be made without careful consideration for both the current force and the future force."

## 507 ARW RECRUITERS

Senior Master Sgt. Marvin Greene (senior recruiter) Tinker AFB, OK 405.734.5331



Master Sgt. Melissa Melichar (in-service recruiter) Tinker AFB, OK 405.739.2980

Master Sgt. Ronald Gregory Altus, OK 580.481.5123



Master Sgt. Marcel Jacques Midwest City, OK 405.733.9403

Master Sgt. Tony Anderson Midwest City, OK 405.733.7639



Tech. Sgt. Jackie Harris-Sanchez Moore/Norman, OK 405.217.8311

Staff Sgt. Seneca Collins Tulsa, OK 918.250.3400



# Aug-Sept 2011 Enlisted Promotions

### AIRMAN

Hickman, Brandon L. 507 MDS  
Jordan, Rachael E. 465 ARS  
Merrell, Zachary J. 507 LRS  
Rodrigues, Patrick A. 507 MXS

### AIRMAN FIRST CLASS

Hardesty, Taelor M. 507 SFS

### SENIOR AIRMAN

Ketchersid, Landon B. 513 MXS  
Shaw, Spencer F. 507 CES  
Waterhouse, Kristopher K. 507 MXS

### STAFF SERGEANT

Blaine, Kevin T. 513 MXS  
Hooper, Nikia V. 513 OSF  
McKinley, Benjamin P. 507 FSS  
Montero, Jose A. 507 FSS  
Stokely, Larnell L. II 507 FSS  
Via, John D. 507 LRS  
Watkins, Matthew R. 72 APS

### TECHNICAL SERGEANT

Fitzwater, Joshua S. 72 APS  
Green, Brian J. 513 MXS  
Martinez, Jose P. 507 AMXS  
Singleton, Tony B. 507 CES  
Webb, Christopher 507 LRS

### MASTER SERGEANT

Hojnacki, Carl J. 507 FSS  
Humphrey, Gregrey H. 507 MXS  
Scott, Christopher O. 507 SFS  
Still, Corey D. 507 AMXS  
Talley, Andrea L. 507 MDS  
Tomlins, James R. 507 AMXS  
Younger, Syllas R. 513 AMXS

## UTA Schedule

### FY 2012

October 1-2  
November 5-6  
December 3-4  
January 7-8  
February 4-5  
March 3-4  
April 14-15  
May 5-6  
June 2-3  
July 14-15  
August 4-5  
September 8-9

\*UTA dates subject to change