

507th Air Refueling Wing and 513th Air Control Group U.S. Air Force Reserve

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On-final

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Keeping the wheels of your 'tricycle' balanced

by Chief Master Sgt. Stephen A. Brown
507th Air Refueling Wing, Command Chief

Several years ago I used to look to the sky, see a small aircraft flying by and tell my wife, one day I'd like to have that kind of freedom. That year I received flying lessons as a birthday present from my wife and mother.

While learning how to fly, I realized that although you do have certain freedoms, none of these come free; not that it costs an arm and a leg, but that you must dedicate your time to absolutely absorb everything you could possibly learn about flight patterns, weather, planning, charts, airport diagrams, flight characteristics and the aircraft you are preparing to fly.....or more importantly....land!

I remember going over the preflight checklist and inspecting the aircraft in a repetitive yet meticulous manner, always talking through the checklist so both myself and the instructor could hear the inspection followed by "check" or "uh oh, where's maintenance"!

One thing in particular you always look at is the landing gear. Several small aircraft have a landing gear referred to as a "tricycle." This is one of the most critical components of the aircraft as it reacts to the largest loads placed on the aircraft. The landing gear controls the rate of compression/extension and prevents damage to the aircraft. The landing gear must be tough, corrosion resistant and capable of absorbing incredible shock.

I'll never forget my first solo landing...I kept flopping down the runway before I finally stayed down and taxied around to give it another go. My flight instructor was on the radio providing positive statements such as "nice pancakes" and "how many times do you plan on flopping?" Honestly, the first thing I did when the flight was over was a thorough inspection of the landing gear; I could have sworn I cracked or broke something.

So why do I bring up my first solo flight, flying lessons, inspecting the landing gear...because that is what we do every day as citizen Airmen. If any of the three tires, struts or attachment points of the "tricycle" gear gives way, I'd be in a heck of a mess. Similarly, we are on a three-legged stool, balancing our civilian jobs, our military commitment and our families. Take the time to inspect the legs of your stool and make sure they are strong yet flexible. Be a good wingman; if you see your fellow Airman falling "off kilter," speak up as sometimes we get so focused on one leg, we don't notice we are off on another.

The mission of this wing is constantly moving and we as citizen Air-



Chief Master Sgt. Stephen A. Brown
507th Air Refueling Wing Command Chief

men are perpetually adapting to the changes thrown our way. Keep in mind, we are all in this together, so don't ever think your problems are isolated. Resources are available to help all of our Airmen if and when they are in need. Utilize your resources and stay strong. Looking forward to a great 2013!

Vietnam Ace shares F-4 Phantom experiences to Tinker Reservists

by Tech. Sgt. Grady Epperly
507th Air Refueling Wing, Public Affairs

Many members and alumni of the 507th Air Refueling Wing have fond memories and experiences with the F-4 Phantom but Col. Charles "Chuck" DeBellevue's experiences in the F-4 are truly unlike any other.

While serving in the Vietnam War, DeBellevue became the first Air Force Weapon Systems Officer (WSO) to become a flying ace.

In October 1971, DeBellevue was sent to the famed 555th Tactical Fighter Squadron, affectionately referred to as the Triple Nickel at Udorn Royal Thai Air Force Base, Thailand. Flying in an F-4D as the WSO with pilot Captain Steve Ritchie on May 10, 1972, he and Ritchie scored the first of four Mikoyan-Gurevich MiG-21 kills they would achieve together.

DeBellevue would also down two MiG-19s making him the only Ace of the Vietnam War to down six enemy aircraft.

He attributes his success to the core values he learned north of Hanoi, which are integrity,

discipline, leadership, followership, and teamwork.

"Training is the glue that holds the core values together," said Col. DeBellevue. "If you train the way you are going to fight, you will fight the way you trained."

DeBellevue, who retired from active duty in 1998, visited the Tinker AFB Reserve campus November 3 to be the featured speaker at a luncheon sponsored by the Reserve Officers Association of the United States, Oklahoma Chapter and the Air Force Association, Gertrity Chapter 215.

He retired with numerous awards, including the Air Force Cross, the Silver Star with two oak leaf clusters, the Legion of Merit and

the Distinguished Flying Cross with five oak leaf clusters, among others.



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Grady Epperly
Retired Air Force Col. Charles DeBellevue talks about his experiences in the F-4 Phantom. DeBellevue is the only Vietnam War Ace to shoot down six enemy aircraft.

Reservists and Guardsmen Spread Holiday Cheer to disabled veterans

by Capt. Jon Quinlan
507th Air Refueling Wing, Public Affairs

Reserve and Guard Airmen treated over 300 area disabled veterans to Christmas gifts, food and holiday cheer at the Norman Veterans Center Christmas party December 21.

The program, better known as Angel Tree is run every year by members from the 507th Air Refueling Wing, 137th Air Refueling Wing and 513th Air Control Group supporting the veterans for Christmas. This year marks the 17th year in a row of veteran support.

This is one of the most important and memorable days of the year for the veterans according to Norman Veterans Center activities director, Glen Williams.

"The vets love the opportunity to share stories and interact with the servicemen," Williams said. "This party is huge and is the main source of gifts for our veterans in our facility; I know it brings a lot of smiles."

Through fund raising, the 507th, 137th, and 513th raised over \$4,300 which bought the veterans over 300 gifts filling the Christmas wishes of all in the facility. Everything kind of gift was purchased from hats and blankets to games and razors.

According to 507th Maintenance Squadron coordinator, Tech Sgt. Herbert Briscoe, the wing exceeded its goal.

"I want to thank all our 507th and 137th friends for giving to our Vet's, as this will brighten up their Holiday Season."

Veterans at the Norman Vets Center were happy to see the Airmen and spent many hours sharing stories, wisdom and cake.

"They said we were going to have a party and I just thought well, it's a little party, but I was so surprised to see so many people here,"



Photo by Senior Airman Mark Hybers
Airman Jadie Evans, an intelligence analyst for the 507th Operations Support Flight, listens to a story from a veteran at the Norman Veterans Center in Norman Oklahoma. Over \$4,300 was raised by members of the 507th Air Refueling Wing for gifts to be donated to the veterans. Several members went to the center to help serve food, drinks and help open gifts during the annual Christmas party. Members of the 507th have been donating gifts since the center opened in 1996.

Jessamine Shields, a World War II Navy nurse, said. "This is just marvelous."

Mrs. Shields was just one of the veterans who played a crucial role in World War II, the Korean War and Vietnam. Stories during the party ranged from how to maintain the KC-135 in the 1970's to arriving at Pearl Harbor the day after the attack by the Japanese in 1941.

"I am always amazed by these veterans," said Senior Master Sgt. Bob Gaspar, of the 507th Operations Support Flight. "To me, there is not much more that says Christmas than doing this. It's the least we can do to support them for their service to our country."

The Veterans Administration operates more than 1,400 sites of care, including 232 Veterans Centers. Since the first Vet Center opened, more than 2 million veterans have been helped. Every year, the Vet Centers serve more than 130,000 veterans and accommodate more than a million visits by veterans and family members.

The Norman Veterans Center opened in 1996. The 239,000 sq. foot facility has a 301 bed capacity to serve both male and female Oklahoma wartime veterans.



COVER PHOTO
A C-17 Globemaster from the Mississippi Air National Guard receives fuel from a 507th Air Refueling Wing KC-135 Stratotanker. (Photo by Capt Jon Quinlan)

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Santa arrives in the form of generous Reserve and Guard Airmen *Operation Holiday Spirit a big success*

by Senior Airman Mark Hybers
507th Air Refueling Wing, Public Affairs

The Del City American Legion was alive with activity here Nov. 30, as Reserve and Guard Airmen raised over \$34,000 for military families in need at the Operation Holiday Spirit (OHS) annual charity fund raiser.

This year marks the 14th year of Operation Holiday Spirit, where members of the 507th Air Refueling Wing, 513th Air Control Group and 137th Air Refueling Wing, Oklahoma Air National Guard, raise funds.

Operation Holiday Spirit started as a complete accident. "I was eavesdropping on a conversation between a first sergeant and a family in need," said Lt. Col. Ralph Hawkins, 513th Air Control Group Executive Officer. "I shouldn't have been doing that, but that's what execs do," laughed Hawkins.

That conversation ignited a fire inside Hawkins that has led to hundreds of families receiving help during the holidays. "I just never dreamed we would still be doing it 14 years later," Hawkins said.

The plan for that first dinner was to have a steak dinner and donate the funds raised to some families that were identified by the various First Sergeants around the wing.

Hawkins, then the 507th Air Refueling Wing Executive Officer, used the break area in the Aircraft Maintenance Squadron to serve the 45 members that showed up.

The first OHS raised some \$2,700 and helped 18 families. Last year, 310 people turned out for the steak supper and raised over \$27,000 help-

ing 61 families.

"This is growing more and more each year," said Hawkins. "I expect this year there will be more families and we are really going to be focused pretty hard ensuring the kids have a good Christmas."

The names of the families to receive OHS donations are not turned in until after the steak supper. The first sergeants take about a week or more to gather the nominations.

This year's steak supper really showed the generosity of members around Tinker and the 137th. This year's supper had 311 people in attendance. Money from the steak supper, auctions



Photo by Senior Airman Mark Hybers

Members from the 507th and 137th Air Refueling Wing and 513th Air Control Group gather around the silent auction table to bid on various items. The money raised was divided up and donated to members in need who were nominated by their respective first sergeant's.

and silent auction items, raised over \$34,000.

People were bidding on the silent auction items and screaming out for steaks as they were coming in from the grill.

There were several grills going outside the building with volunteers grilling the steaks to medium rare, medium well and well done. One of the "grill masters" this year was Senior Master Sgt. Larry DeSalle from the 137th Maintenance Squadron.

"It's great to be a part of this. We'll have all these grills going until everyone inside has been served," said DeSalle.

Hawkins also gave much praise to the level of involvement the Oklahoma Air National Guard. "We have seen more and more from them every year and I think it's a great partnership."

The evening capped off with the auction items. Hot items such as a Sam Bradford autographed St. Louis Rams football helmet really had the crowd going. Several people had spouses, not in attendance, on the phone as the bidding went higher and higher.

"We could not do this without all the people that help out, cooking, serving and planning," Hawkins said.

With this year's supper being the biggest ever and his retirement looming, Hawkins says he's really going to miss it, but he's going to keep coming back.

"The satisfaction of doing this and seeing the look on the recipients faces will keep me coming back as long as they will have me," he said.

Christmas for some Airmen was a little brighter this year as the 507th ARW, 513th ACG and 137th ARW delivered their special brand of holiday spirit.

Safety isn't by chance: always be vigilant

by Tech. Sgt. Regina Rector
507th Air Refueling Wing Ground Safety Manager

This article is not about a list of "do's and don'ts," it's about being intentionally proactive and vigilant at all levels. Here are some tips to incorporate safety on a daily basis:

1. Be an informed consumer. Reading is fundamental because being uninformed cannot save you from a mishap. Take the time to read your item's manufacturer's instructions. They may not be perfectly written but they can save you some time and advise you how to use your item safely. Do not forget to check any manufacturer's recall notice. Follow any instructions the recall notice gives you for your item.

2. Be smarter than the task. Do not let the task be smarter than you. Overconfidence, performing a task while distracted, hurrying, or feeling rush are factors that can lead to a mishap. Do not become a statistic by trying to outwit the laws of physics.
3. You only have one chance to invest in yourself. Be your greatest advocate. You are the one who will have to recover from the injury. You may even have to live with your injury for the rest of your life. Take the time to take care of yourself while you are accomplishing your tasks, whether on or off duty.

2013 UTA SCHEDULE

5-6 January

2-3 February

2-3 March

6-7 April

4-5 May

1-2 June

13-14 July

Highly skilled dance performed at 25,000 feet

by Senior Airman Mark Hybers
507th Air Refueling Wing, Public Affairs

When most people think about skillful dancing, the thought of a couple moving gracefully across a dance floor comes to mind. If you are part of the KC-135 Stratotanker refueling crew, you're probably picturing two planes less than 50 feet apart bouncing around at 25,000 feet while trying to connect a refueling boom into what appears to be a golf ball-sized hole.

This well-choreographed, highly skilled dance conducted by members of the 507th and 137th Air Refueling Wings aircrew is one way of trying to describe the air refueling process.

This important mission takes an enormous amount of education, training, manpower and focus to remain calm under intense pressure to pull it off.

Pressure starts during pre-flight checks. Ground crews communicate back and forth with the pilots as they check off a long list of items.

Once airborne, the pilots communicate between Air Force and civilian air traffic control personnel for air space and altitude clearance. They then set the coordinates and altitude in preparation to meet the receiver (plane receiving fuel) at the pre-coordinated air refueling track.

When the planes are within 10 to 15 minutes of each other, the boom operator gets in position, takes out a check list and runs the refueling boom through a series of checks to ensure it's working properly.

Once the receiver moves to within 50 feet of the boom a series of light signals begins between the boom operator and the receiving pilot. This is when the dance begins and with it comes immense pressure until the evolution is complete.

"Even the book says two planes flying in

close proximity is inherently dangerous," said Master Sgt. Jeff Bass, 465th Air Refueling Squadron boom operator, during a recent air refueling training of a 966th Airborne Air Control Squadron E-3 Sentry also out of Tinker Air Force Base. "It becomes even more tense when you get radio to radio communication and find out they are doing an extraordinary amount of training."

The pilot from the Sentry calls out two check rides, two instructor pilot upgrades and two new students. During this flight, each of the pilots goes through a series of training exercises while controlling the plane. They must move in close, move left and right. They move up closer to the tanker and move down further away from the tanker.

While pilots from the Sentry perform each of these tasks for qualifying and training purposes, Bass steadily calls out signals and moves the boom back and forth in an effort to make contact.

"The one-hour and forty-two minutes we were hooked up is an unusually long time for one boom to be on the controls," said Maj. Jeff Milburn, a KC-135 pilot from the 465th Air Refueling Squadron.

"It's very important for us to have a lot of trust and communication with the boom operator," added Milburn. "Bass is a very good and very experienced boom operator, but it's still a long time to be under that amount of pressure."

Milburn said everyone on both planes is counting on the boom operator.

"The pilots of the receiver are counting on the boom to make sure they are safely getting close enough for refueling and we are counting on the boom to make sure that the pilots of the receiver aren't being too erratic and getting us into a dangerous situation," he said.

Bass remains calm during the entire process. As each part of the training is finished, he calls out signals to the E-3 pilots, all the while communicating with Milburn and co-pilot 1st Lt. Jonathan Loper, 465th Air Refueling Squadron, in the KC-135.

"Each pilot flies a little differently, so it's important to see their tendencies, get them stabilized and then move them in for contact," said Bass. "I'm constantly trying to keep the boom moving ahead of the receptacle so that once they get good and stable, I can make contact with no issues."

Once both planes enter the air refueling track, the receiving E-3 comes up behind the KC-135. The boom operator calls out '50 feet and slightly low.' Once the plane is stable the boom operator brings the plane in with the forward light.

"One foot per second, coming down the middle," says Bass. "I'll then call out 10 foot increments and

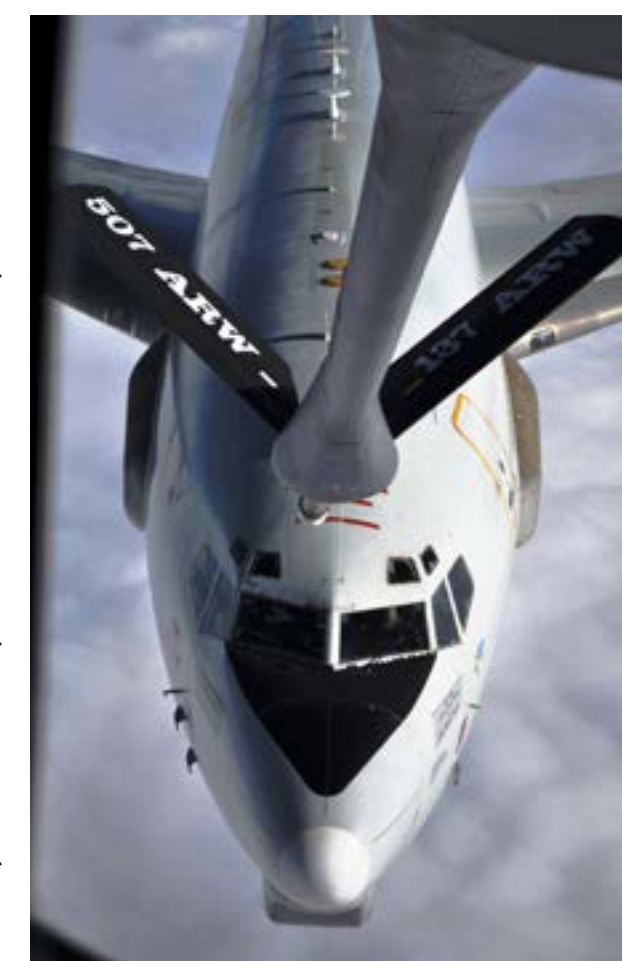


Photo by Senior Airman Mark Hybers

An E-3 Sentry moves slowly into position to receive fuel from a 507th KC-135

once the plane is stable, I'll try to make contact with the boom."

Meanwhile, the pilot of the receiving plane is looking to a fixed point trying to keep the aircraft steady on that point.

"With two planes moving, that can be some work," added Bass. "I have to try to keep the boom lined up and within certain parameters for it to be a safe operation. If he's moving too quickly towards one of those limits, I might trigger a disconnect."

The final task during this particular training is to actually off-load 50,000 gallons of fuel. There were two pilots on the E-3 who needed to take control of the plane, each connecting with the KC-135 for 25,000 gallons of fuel.

Off-loading fuel is also very challenging. While the Bass is doing his part controlling the boom and keeping the planes connected during fuel transfer, Milburn and Loper are controlling the fuel off-load.

Once the refueling is finished, Bass calls foot markers out to 100 feet, to let the pilots of the E-3 and KC-135 know when everyone is clear. Then he takes a deep breath and shakes the blood back into his hands, grabs his checklist and secures the boom.

"I just don't think I could possibly do any other job in the Air Force," Bass says with a laugh.

Now at the controls, Loper takes the KC-135 back to Tinker Air Force Base for landing. People on the ground in the St. Louis area have no idea that a group of talented, well trained crew just pulled off a highly skilled "dance" 25,000 feet over their heads.



Photo by Senior Airman Mark Hybers

Maj. Jeff Milburn of the 465th Air Refueling Squadron checks some gauges as he prepares the KC-135 for a rendezvous with an E-3 Sentry for an aerial refueling recently.

New program prepares recruits for air force basic military training

Twenty two Air Force Reserve enlistees took part in the new Development and Training Flight (DTF) program here designed to ease civilians into Air Force life.

New recruits awaiting Basic Military Training (BMT) have the opportunity to take part in this program, the first of its kind for the 507th. It's designed to give newly enlisted Reservists the framework for success.

The program started as a conversation a few months ago. The Air Force Reserve Command initiative, has seen some success at other reserve wings, said the DTF facilitators.

Master Sgt. Tom Lord, 507 Medical Squadron, was select-

ed to facilitate the new program. He, along with Chief Master Sgt. Stephen Brown, 507 Command Chief, visited Travis Air Force Base to look at their program. Once Lord saw how it works and how it's designed, he was fully committed to getting it off the ground.

Work began on the DTF Oct. 1 with the December UTA in mind as the start date.

"There was a lot of coordination and planning that went into this," Lord said. "There were so many people involved in the process. I could not have possibly done this without them."

The weekend for the recruits starts Friday night with a stay at the base. Saturday morning everyone met at the Airman Leadership School for roll call and then it's off to breakfast. Once the recruits are back at the classroom, the rest of the day is carried out very much like a day of boot camp.

Many guest speakers and facilitators were in and out throughout the day teaching a variety of topics and lend-

ing their own personal perspective to better help the new recruits understand what lies ahead.

"It was nice to see different recruits getting different things out of this first weekend," said Lord.

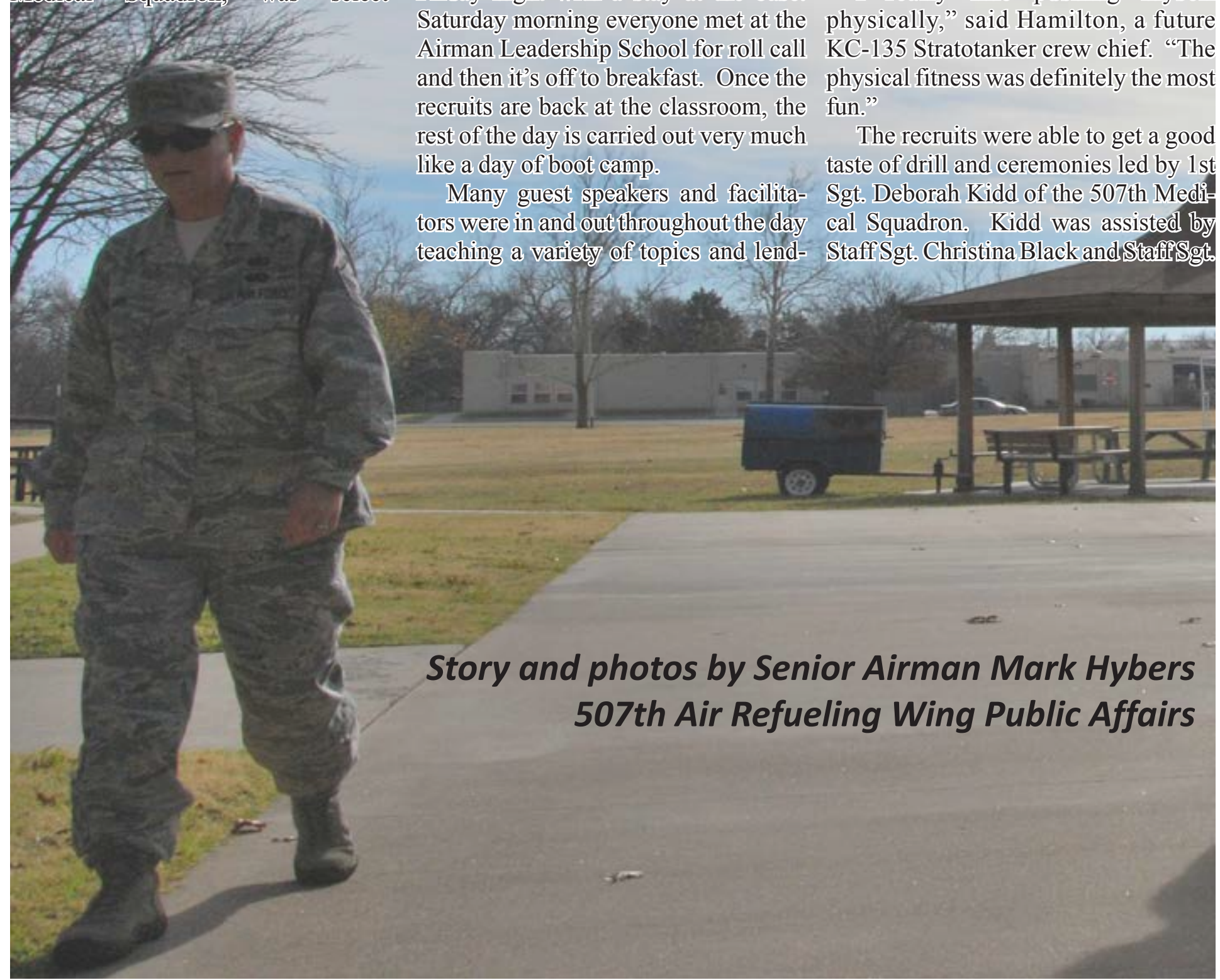
The 507th Vice Commander, Col. Kevin Trayer spoke in the morning and explained to the new recruits just how important this program is for them and how great the opportunities coming their way.

The recruits were then taken to the track for a morning of physical fitness.

Nathalie Hamilton, one of the recruits really enjoyed the fit to fight portion of the first weekend.

I really like pushing myself physically," said Hamilton, a future KC-135 Stratotanker crew chief. "The physical fitness was definitely the most fun."

The recruits were able to get a good taste of drill and ceremonies led by 1st Sgt. Deborah Kidd of the 507th Medical Squadron. Kidd was assisted by Staff Sgt. Christina Black and Staff Sgt.



**Story and photos by Senior Airman Mark Hybers
507th Air Refueling Wing Public Affairs**

Jason Overstreet both of the 507th Security Forces Squadron.

Recruits were taken through a variety of facing movements and taught how to gather information.

"That was a lot harder than I thought it would be," said Hamilton.

Sergeant Lord was very complimentary of Kidd, Black and Overstreet, stating that this portion of the weekend was one of the most informative and productive for the new recruits. He said they were able to see real life exercises that will be performed the first day they arrive at boot

camp.

"I'm really glad I was able to see the mental side of this," said Tanner Daugherty, who leaves for BMT in early January. "You understand the physical part of this, but no one can really tell you about..."

See DTF on page 8





Photo by Senior Airman Mark Hybers

1st Sgt. Deborah Kidd of the 507th Medical Squadron demonstrates some basic formation techniques to a group of future reservists recently. The group is the first to be part of the 507th Air Refueling Wing's Development and Training Flight. The program is designed to smooth the transition from civilian to military life.



Photos by Senior Airman Mark Hybers

Top right - Staff Sgt. Jason Overstreet, 507 Security Forces, has students from the first Development and Training Flight lined up for training. Overstreet teaches the new recruits how to line up, march and other basic formations. **Bottom right** - Nathalie Hamilton feels the pressure of getting into formation and performing dress right dress and about face drills. Hamilton, one of 22 future recruits, is part of the 507th Air Refueling Wing's first Development and Training Flight. The program is designed to prepare new recruits for the rigors of military life. **Above** - Staff Sgt. Jason Overstreet inspects Christy Roberts. The formal inspection is part of the new Development and Training Flight program's afternoon activities. The inspection is designed to teach new recruits what to expect while in boot camp. The Development and Training Flight started here at the 507 ARW in December with 22 new recruits staying at Tinker Air Force base for the Unit Training Assembly weekend. The recruits spent the weekend at the Airman Leadership School attending classes, performing drills and even going through physical fitness training. The program, an Air Force Reserve Command initiative, is designed to invest in the future recruits by giving them valuable training before they go to bootcamp.

DTF from Page 7

...the mental part of this.”

With these recruits leaving for BMT at random times, new recruits will join the older ones every month. Some of the expectation on the older recruits is they have the leadership to help out new arrivals, Lord said.

“It’s important that each month when the new recruits show up, there is already a handful of their peers taking the leadership role to help them through that first weekend,” Lord said.

With AFRC easing the transition of civilians into the military life, the facilitators hope this program will continue to gain momentum.

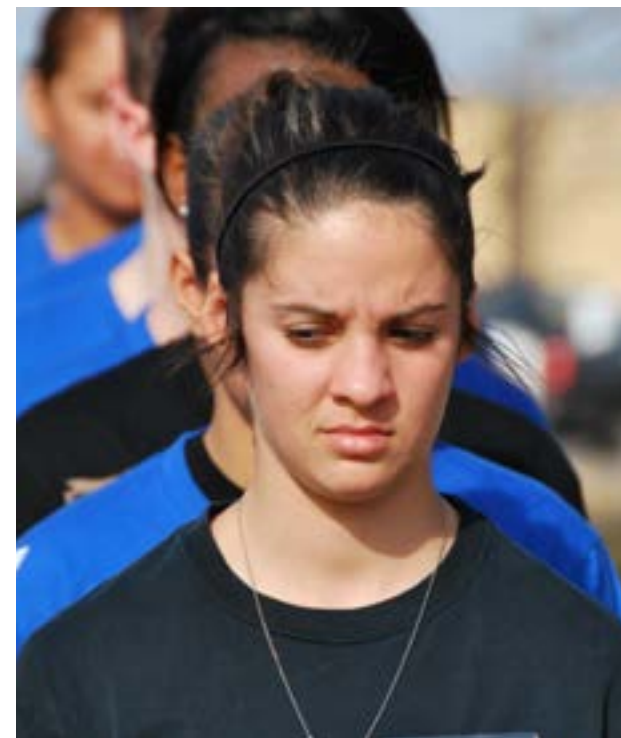


Photo by Capt. Jon Quinlan

Boom Operators Staff Sgt. Michaelle Sallee (Left) and Airman First Class Rachael Jordan from the 465th Air Refueling Squadron discuss air refueling operations before conducting training with a C-17 Globemaster crew from the 172nd Airlift Wing, Mississippi Air National Guard. Boom operators play a crucial role in air refueling operations around the world.



Photo by Senior Airman Mark Hybers

The flightline is empty as a snow storm causes poor flying conditions. Members from the 507th Air Refueling Wing were not to get outside to work on the planes in the snow due to dangerously low temperatures.



Photo by Senior Airman Mark Hybers

Tech. Sgt. Patrick Garrison and Tech. Sgt. Michelle Tharpe from the 507th Air Refueling Wing Chaplains Office load filled stockings, donated by members of the 507th Air Refueling Wing, 513th Air Control Group and 137th Air Refueling Wing, Oklahoma Air National Guard, destined for the Salvation Army. The Salvation Army distributed the more than 170 stockings to the Salvation Army to provide for needy children throughout the Oklahoma City area.