

VIKING FLYER

934th Airlift Wing (AFRC)

Minneapolis-St. Paul IAP Air Reserve Station, Minn.

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Farewell North Stars

By Allan L. Swartzmiller
934th Operations Group commander

It's hard to believe that it has been nearly four years since our move to Minnesota. Thanks to my previous associations with former wing commander Col. Jim Muscatel and some good timing, I was afforded the opportunity to join the 934th Airlift Wing. We all looked forward to the possibilities. I would get to fly the C-130 again after nearly a dozen years and see first-hand how things have changed for tactical airlifters. Having grown up in Michigan, I thought this was great. We would get to experience four seasons. For some in our family, that would be a first time.

I would also be able to demonstrate my snow-skiing prowess to Lana and the boys and maybe even buy a snowmobile. I would be returning to the land of the Big Ten Conference. I looked forward to seeing Michigan State University regularly on television. I would be back home. A home that included ice hockey. Yes, I thought, I'm going to watch the North Stars play the Red Wings.

The group that I joined was like many reserve units around the country at the time. The airlift squadron had just de-mobilized after a two-year activation and personnel were returning to their civilian employers. Our job was to reconstitute the force and incorporate the lessons-learned from the experience. Sure we continued to participate on short deployments to Puerto Rico and Germany, we even deployed to Alaska to participate in the first-ever Exercise Red Flag-Alaska, but

for the most part the sense was that the active duty would finish the job in Iraq and Afghanistan. We had answered the call. We did our duty, now back to the business of a reservist. We were in post-9/11 mode.

The realization that we were not in a post-9/11 mode, but really in a pre-Operational Reserve mode occurred for me in late 2007. The Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron was volunteered for a year to support the Inter-Continental Medical Operations Plan, a joint service plan for the redistribution of casualties from an overseas conflict. They rotated 120-day deployments from October 2007 through September 2008, only taking time-off to participate in the Wing's Operational Readiness Inspection.

Then the 96th Airlift Squadron was informed they were needed again in the CENTCOM AOR. At first for only a month, but the next rotation for a full AEF cycle with future regularity. The news shouldn't have been a surprise.

The knowledge that U.S. Army Reserve and Guard units were performing their second, third and even fourth year-long deployments was understood. For our seasoned personnel, this was a huge paradigm shift. For those who joined after 9/11, not so much. In either case, I couldn't have been more impressed with the responses we received. All staff and crew positions were filled. Everyone understood our responsibility. We're still unclear of how this new Operational Reserve concept will fit into our lives. We've

certainly benefited from numerous pay and quality of life improvements over the last several years. I realize now that they were not gratis, but targeted at our retention.

The business of defense needs to be competitive with other market options. The personnel, skill-sets and resources of our wing are a national treasure and your motivation to keep family, civilian career and a demanding reserve commitment all in balance is imperative to the National Defense. From my perspective the 934th AW has done an outstanding job and I am proud to be a part of it.

As we prepare for our departure, I thank all 934th AW personnel for their service and for their hospitality. I have absolutely enjoyed my time as a Flying Viking and getting to know and understand the great people who work here.

I have learned to not be surprised, just humbled, when I read the numerous award packages that were staffed through the wing enroute to higher headquarters. But not only the award winners, I've especially enjoyed the working relationships we've developed along the way. There wasn't a problem we couldn't solve together and together we've accomplished so much since August, 2005: UCI, ASEV, HSI, MSEP, ORI, ATSEP and AEF. An alphabet soup of inspections and tests and all successfully accomplished with class. Even though I missed my chance to see the North Stars play the Red Wings, Minneapolis has been a great assignment, thank you all. *Col. S.*

VIKING FLYER

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The Viking Flyer is mailed to reservists' homes. Copies of the Viking Flyer are also available at various locations on base.

All photos are Air Force photographs unless otherwise indicated.

On the cover

Staff Sgt. Robert McDonald, 934th Security Forces Squadron, (left) verifies proper weapons clearing procedures by Navy Master at Arms Seaman Rafael Banks before guard mount. Story on page 4. (Air Force Photo/Master Sgt. Paul Zadach)



Editor's Note: Command Chief Master Sgt. Robert Cluka was selected as the 934th Airlift Wing command chief in January. Here, the chief shares some of his views on the job and what he hopes to accomplish.

What made you decide to apply for the Command Chief position?

It was a chance to serve and represent the Airmen of the 934th Airlift Wing at a level that would make a difference.

How did your background shape you for this role?

The diversity that I experienced both on active duty and in the Reserves helped to shape me, but most of all my mentors (both enlisted and officers) develop my leadership abilities. Also, having the opportunity to attend Professional Military Education from Airman to Senior NCO taught me to look at every situation differently.

What are some of the challenges facing the enlisted force today that you want to tackle?

Acceptance: Accepting change in programs, policy and structure. Accept-

New command chief shares views

By Capt. S.J. Brown
934th Public Affairs

ing that we are an operational force and the commitment it will take to support that. Accepting sacrifices (service before self) and knowing that the award will be ten folds greater down the road.

What do you hope to accomplish during your time as Command Chief for the 934th AW?

One goal would be to continue to build a viable and mission capable enlisted force. The 934th AW has one of the best enlisted forces in the Reserve and we know it, our next goal is to let everyone else know it by the way we perform.

What is the biggest piece of advice you have for anyone who wants to follow in your footsteps and become a Command Chief?

Don't wait for opportunity to find you! Be ready, take on extra responsibility, complete your PME at every level, and be ready to except challenging positions (e.g. first sergeant, group, wing and numbered AF level).

The IG Says...

Air Force military and civilian members have a duty to promptly report Fraud Waste and Abuse or Gross Mismanagement.

Gross Mismanagement -- A management action or inaction that creates a substantial risk of significant adverse impact on the organization's ability to accomplish its mission. It is more than mere, trivial wrongdoing or negligence. It does not include management decisions that are merely debatable, nor does it mean action or inaction that constitutes simple negligence or wrongdoing. There must be an element of blatancy.

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JOINT FORCE

AIRMEN/SAILORS COMBINE FOR SECURITY MISSION

By Tech. Sgt. Jeffrey Williams
934th Public Affairs

“Fall in!” came the command from Tech. Sgt. David Hoover, 934th Security Forces Squadron, as 11 fully-armed “cops” stood at full attention for roll call during a recent guard mount Feb 7. Among them were five U.S. Navy Masters at Arms training and working alongside their Air Force colleagues.

The joint training was the idea of Lt. Ryan Metzler, Navy Reserve Security Forces, Rota, Spain commanding officer. Realizing the need for his young sailors to gain needed experience before their annual tours, he contacted Capt. Leo Moreno, 934th SFS operations officer, and proposed joint training.

“All elements here mirror our active duty mission,” Lieutenant Metzler said. “Rota [Air Base], Spain has an Air Force detachment that we work with, and everything we do is designed to make my guys better when they deploy. Captain Moreno has a pool of reservists to depend on if needed and we have a trust factor already built up. So far, everything fits very well.”

Since October 2008, Navy reservists have augmented Air Force Security Forces during regular shifts for real world experience during half the drill weekend each month, while using the other half for classroom training.

“They’re cops, just like we are, but they don’t get the opportunities to get operational experience except for their annual tour,” said Captain Moreno. “Here, they get their experience and we get a source of augmentees. We get to help out some reservists and they get training. It’s all good.”

“They go to the same security forces academy that we do, but also have specialized master at arms training,” he added. “Since they are working on an Air Force installation, we need to make sure Air Force standards are maintained. I hope that eventually we can do some operational and law enforcement exercises with the extra manpower, but we’ll see what happens in the future.”

Master at Arms 3rd Class Brice Powers was one of the first MAs to participate and said that learning the difference in ranks and command structures between the two units is a benefit to this training program.

“The loading procedures and how the Air Force carries the weapon is a little different and it took a little getting used to doing it their way,” said Powers. “We received a lot of good training and we appreciate the Air Force a lot more.”

“It’s a really good experience working with a lot of great people and learning new things. I’m sure



Master at Arms Seaman Matthew Foy stands at guard mount with 934th Security Forces members. (Air Force Photo/Master Sgt. Paul Zadach)

they say the same about us. I just wish all the Navy people on this base could have the experience working with their Air Force counterparts,” Powers added.

Lieutenant Metzler and Captain Moreno believe that this is the first time that Navy Reserve Master at Arms have joined with Security Forces AGRs for on the job training.

Lieutenant Metzler concluded, “This teaches the different services to work together. Any time we actually deploy together, we do it jointly. We want to make sure our younger guys are not green, but the only way you get experience in standing up on post for a full shift is by doing it. In this regard, I believe we’re pioneers.”

934th Airman, Family Readiness best in AFRC

Story and photo by Capt. S.J. Brown
934th AW Public Affairs

The Airman and Family Readiness Office here was announced as the Air Force Reserve Command's Airman and Family Readiness Office (small base, Category II) of the Year for 2008 in a statement released Jan. 30 by AFRC.

"It's an honor to be chosen for this award," said Vicki Lokken, the office's director since 2006. "Our team works hard and has done a tremendous job supporting the Airmen



Col. Tim Tarchick (left) poses with Baby Bundle recipients and other wing personnel Feb. 7.

and families of this base. They deserve the recognition."

The 14-year old office's team may have only one full-time civil servant, three traditional Reservists and a part-time student hire on payroll, but the services the team provides seem like those one would find at a large, active duty base. Two of the more popular programs offered are free income tax preparation and financial counseling.

"In this economically challenging time, these programs are becoming even more sought after," said Lokken, a trained and experienced financial counselor who provides this service to 934th personnel, as well as Navy, Marines and Air National Guard members. "We work with the base Retiree Activities Office and two AARP tax preparers from January through April to prepare and e-file tax returns free for military, retirees, civil service and reservists of any service."

These programs are vital to people, especially now, because many times money problems overwhelm people and they lose hope, according to Lokken. So, she and her team help people prioritize, budget and deal with creditors. She said it is one of the prime services the Air Force directs the centers to perform.

The office staff of five directly (one-on-one) served more than 350 personnel last year and many more through briefings,

classes, outreach and seminars. But they could not accomplish this feat without the generous support of volunteers.

"Our prime volunteer is Darryl Graves, a retired Air Force master sergeant, who volunteers about 20 hours a week," said Lokken. "He has been doing this for more than 11 years and is continuity for this office. Two other key volunteers are Carrie Moreno and Teri Schweiger. Carrie handles e-mail services that offer spouses a first-hand connection to the base. Teri started out as an intern through the University of Minnesota and continued to volunteer regularly after graduation."

Without the support of staff members and volunteers, Lokken is skeptical that the office would be the benchmark it is for Air Force programs. Recently, the office was hailed as a leader in the Readiness Program with particular emphasis on the reintegration process.

"The far-thinking of the pro-active units, especially the 934th Aeromedical Staging Squadron and base chaplains, made us a spotlight organization in AFRC," added Lokken. "We were even highlighted in an issue of *Citizen Airman* magazine."

"In this economically challenging time, these programs are becoming even more sought after"

Pro-active and innovative are two words that describe the team's efforts. The team not only improved upon programs already being offered to military members (for example, morale calls/Hearts Apart and relocation guidance), they have implemented new programs to benefit Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines and family members – programs like Bundles for Babies, employment counseling and transition assistance.

"I am a Prevention Relationship Enhancement Program-certified instructor who is authorized to provide education, general information and referral services on relationship issues," said Lokken, who brings more than 16 years of experience in the social service career field to the table. "This benefit is not always available on every base on a full-time basis, so I am glad to be able to provide that benefit here."

"We are so honored to have such an award-winning team here," said Col. Tim Tarchick, 934th Airlift Wing commander. "Our Airman and Family Readiness team works hard to support the base and they deserve the recognition this award brings. We thank them for all of their efforts."

Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron

Provided by Staff Sgt. Michelle O'Dean, Unit Public Affairs Representative

Newly promoted Tech. Sgt. Matthew Banyai and wife, Kelly welcomed a baby girl in November.

Congratulations to Senior Airman John Varone, the newest qualified flyer, and to Capt. Ann Selimos and Maj. Gordon Wix the newest flight instructor and flight evaluator.

Welcome to new member Airman 1st Class Jesse Guest, and a hearty welcome back to Maj. David Callahan who returns after a lengthy hiatus.

Military Personnel Flight

Provided by Staff Sgt. Cory Upmeyer, Unit Public Affairs Representative

Tech. Sgt. Nick Glatz and Staff Sgt. James Harsted will be attending Personnel Apprentice Technical School in Biloxi, Miss.

Welcome Back Tech. Sgt. Robin Brewster and Master Sgt. Sheryl Beecher from their deployment to Southwest Asia.

Senior NCO's from the Military Personnel and Services Flights gathered for a first meeting during the February UTA weekend as they began transformation to a Force Support Squadron.

Maintenance

By Master Sgt. Eric Johnson and Staff Sgt. Jose Garza
Unit Public Affairs Representatives

Congratulations to Senior Airman Zachary Blesener who was awarded the Airman of the Quarter for the period of October-December 2008.

Congratulations to Tech. Sgt. Kathryn Pierce for achieving a score of 92 percent on her five-level CDC test.

Congratulations to Master Sgt Jeffrey Dentz for his retirement after 21 years of service.

Staff Sgt. Jose Garza is putting together a marathon team for the 934th Airlift Wing for either the Air Force or Marine Corps Marathon this fall. If you are interested on participating, contact him at extension 3500 or call (712)-251-8445.

Thanks to the Maintenance personnel who assisted the recruiters for Government on Display at the Mall of America Feb. 7-8.

Civil Engineers

By Senior Master Sgt. Doug Johnson, Unit Public Affairs Representative

Congratulations to Tech. Sgt. Tony Lamia who was promoted to Master Sergeant.

Tech. Sgt. Scott Novak and Staff Sgt. Brandy Beeman were recipients of the Air Force Commendation Medal.

CE welcomed its newest members Staff Sgt. Benjamin Bunnell (electric shop) and Senior Airman Christopher Richardson (fire). Farewell to Master Sgt. Mike Lein who retired after 26 years of service. Welcome to Senior Master Sgt. David Sowers for volunteering as the new squadron career advisor.

Staff Sgt Toby Arfstrom (Fire) completed the difficult and demanding Tech-Rescue 1 course.

Logistic Readiness

Provided by Tech. Sgt. Mark Oldenburg, Unit Public Affairs Representative

Congratulations to Staff Sgt. Matthew Countryman who was named 2008 934th Airlift Wing NCO of the Year.

Congrats to Senior Master Sgt. Steven Orwig on becoming 934 LRS operations superintendent.

Capt. Andrew Severt has been selected for return to Air Force Active Duty and will be stationed at Vandenberg Air Force Base, Calif., in May.

Capt. Daniel Johnson has been selected for assignment to 22nd Air Force and will be stationed at Dobbins Air Force Base, Ga.

Congrats to Master Sgt. David Hanson-Best who was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal.

Congrats to Senior Airman Miles Kuykendoll who passed the 5-Level Career Development Course.

Staff Sgt. John Kupka passed the 7-Level CDCs.

Master Sgt. Steven Ward has been upgraded to 7-Level.

Maj. Brian McCullagh who returned from Southwest Asia.

Master Sgt. Charles Colstrom and Staff Sgt. Justin Dodge returned from Joint Enterprise in Germany.

UTA dining facility menu now available online at www.minneapolis.afrc.af.mil

SERGEANTS UPP&ADAM

By Senior Master Sgt. Doug Johnson



UTA Dates

| Month | 934th | 133rd | 88th | <u>Navy</u> <u>Marines</u> |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------------------------------|
| Mar. | 7-8 | 20-21 | 7-8 | 7-8/21-22 |
| Apr. | 4-5 | 17-18 | 4-5 | 4-5/18-19 |
| May | 2-3 | 13-16 | 2-3 | 16-17/30-31 |
| June | 6-7 | 19-20 | 6-7 | 13-14 |
| July | 11-12 | None | 11-12 | 18-19/25-26 |
| Aug. | 1-2 | 14-15 | 1-2 | 8-9/22-23 |
| Sept. | 12-13 | 18-19 | 12-13 | 12-13/19-20 |



Col. Tim Tarchick (right) recognizes award winners at the Feb. 8 commander's call. From left, Staff Sgt. Matthew Countryman, 934th Airlift Wing NCO of the Year, Master Sgt. Todd Kopperud, Air Force Crew Chief of the Year, Senior Airman Christopher Richardson, 22nd Air Force Transportation Airman of the Year, Staff Sgt. Alan Stockinger, 22nd Air Force Aerial Port Squadron NCO of the Year, and Senior Master Sgt. Lawrence Corrigan, Air Force Chief Master Sgt. Larry L. Daniels Award for Civil Engineering. (Air Force Photo/Staff Sgt. Michael Edmond)



Senior Airman Carlisa Patton is greeted by Cols. Tim Tarchick and Eric Brandes as she returns from a deployment to Germany Feb. 7. (Air Force Photo/Master Sgt. Paul Zadach)



Maritsa Bunay,(3) Miguel Bunay, Mason Phair, (6) and Ryan Phair,(3) play inside the 934th Airlift Wing flight deck display while Tech. Sgt. Clint Hamann, 934th Maintenance Squadron, talks about the Air Force at the Mall of America during the annual Government on Display exhibit. (Air Force Photo/Tech. Sgt. Bob Sommer)



The 934th Honor Guard presents the colors at the Minnesota Swarm Lacrosse Team's military appreciation night at the Xcel Energy Center Feb. 7. (Air Force Photo/Tech. Sgt. Jeffrey Williams)

Promotions to:

| | |
|-------------------------------|------|
| Tech. Sgt. Matthew Banyai | AES |
| Tech. Sgt. Ryan Talbot | SFS |
| Tech. Sgt. Charles Smisek | SFS |
| Tech. Sgt. David Gustafson | APS |
| Tech. Sgt. James Running | APS |
| Tech. Sgt. James Kiecksee | APS |
| Tech. Sgt. Carlos Bastidas | ASTS |
| Senior Airman Ashley Sauter | ASTS |
| Senior Airman Jessica Lachman | LRS |
| Senior Airman Ryan Smith | SFS |
| Senior Airman Brent Voss | MXS |
| Senior Airman Michael Berish | SVS |
| Airman 1st Class Chad Cole | MXS |

**JOINT
GIVING**



Navy Captain Kevin Hempel, Naval Operations Support Center commander (top left), Master Sgt. Anthony Gamboni, 934th Security Forces Squadron (right) and Army Sgt. Maj. Renee Hickerson, 88th Regional Readiness Command, are assisted by Red Cross technicians Markie Smith and Amanda Haasis Feb. 10 at the 934th Airlift Wing Fitness Center. (Air Force Photos/Master Sgt. Paul Zadach)

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