



309th Aerospace Maintenance and Regeneration Group



309 AMARG

Renewing the Force...

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A Nightingale's story

The C-9 "Nightingale," an altruistic aeromedical "workhorse," awaits its fate on AMARG's display row. Clearly recognizable as serial number 71-0875, it's also clearly marked for destruction. The large red spray painted "D" on the fuselage indicates demilitarization and disposal, the end of the line for this platform.

Although this particular aircraft may be in the final stages of its service life, its legacy of saving the life of the Pitts family's newborn daughter will forever be remembered.

On February 4, 1993, Angelica Marie Pitts, premature, weighing only 2 pounds, 14 ounces and just hours old, was urgently transferred from the emergency room in Yokota Air Base Japan to a C-9 aeromedical evacuation (AE) flight bound for Kadena Air Base in Okinawa. This critical flight, one that would preserve Angelica's fragile life, was on board tail number "875."

Davie Pitts, Angelica's father, was also on this life-saving flight's manifest. Dave, now an AMARG employee, but at the time, a mechanic assigned to a Yokota C-9 maintenance squadron. Dave would accompany his 10-week early newborn to Kadena's neonatal intensive care unit until her discharge a month later.

On the morning of Angelica's birth, the flight crew of "875" was made aware of the emergency unfolding and thus anticipated the arrival of their delicate passenger. They ensured the aircraft was ready for immediate departure, according to Ms. Karen Pitts, Angelica's mother. "They had that plane ready to go, because they had one of their own on board," said Ms. Pitts. "The Air Force is one big family," she exclaimed.

After her baby's delivery, it took two units of blood to stabilize Karen as the result of a ruptured placenta, the reason for Angelica's early arrival. But after just one week, she was strong enough to reunite with her husband and baby in Okinawa.

"Angelica was so very tiny and it was touch and go in the beginning," said Ms. Pitts. "I have to credit the flight crew of "875" and the obstetrician for saving our daughter Angelica's life."

Angelica, now 17 and a junior at Rincon High School, hopes to study culinary arts after graduation and become a chef. She has two siblings, Jillian and James.

On Thursday, the entire Pitts family was invited to reunite with the aircraft. On board, Dave remembered that pivotal day in February as if it were yesterday. "I'm so thankful that the Air Force had a system in place to save Angelica and my wife's life," said Dave. "I'm sure ours isn't the only happy ending. If only these planes could talk," he added.

The C-9s, flown from 1968 until retiring in 2005, served this nation well. Named in honor of Florence Nightingale, the British nurse who pioneered military nursing, it was the only aircraft specifically designed

to transport litter and ambulatory patients. However, new aeromedical technology, called patient support pallets (PSP) now make it possible to transport patients aboard aircraft not normally utilized for AE. Built on a standard cargo pallet, the PSP provides support for six litters or a combination of three airline seats and three stretchers and may be used on board the Air Force's KC-135 Stratotankers, KC-10 Extenders and C-17 Globemaster IIIs.

In 1993, Angelica Marie Pitts (right), born prematurely and weighing less than 3 lbs, was aeromedically evacuated from Yokota Air Base, Japan to Kadena Air Base in Okinawa on board C-9, 71-0875. Today, Angelica (below) is 17 and her family credits "875" and crew with saving her life.



Shown right, Dave, Angelica and Karen Pitts, reunite with C-9, serial number 71-0875. The aircraft arrived for storage in 2003 and is awaiting final disposition.





Staff Sgt. Stephanie Barnes, assigned to AMARG's 309th Support Squadron as a supply management technician, recently graduated from the 250X1 Supply Management Course achieving the Commander's Excellence Award. The award identifies Staff Sgt. Barnes as "top in the class."



Naval Logistics Specialist 2nd Class Camilla Hill re-enlisted for four more years of active duty on May 21, she's served seven. Currently a Navy recruiter in Tucson, she'll travel to Fla. next week to interview for a Blue Angels logistician position. Above, Naval Commander Toppin administers the oath of office to LS2 Hill.

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What are your plans for the summer? Keep Safety in mind, and think Wingman

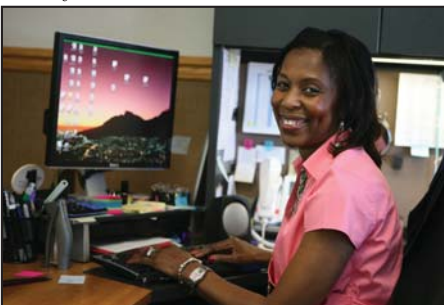
Whether it's hitting the road for the California beaches, taking the boat out for that first seasonal test drive or quietly celebrating the warmth of summer with a backyard barbecue, make sure it's a healthy and safe one for you and your family.



Mr. Tommy Bledsoe, AMARG Historian, will attend the 2010 DeafNation World Expo in Las Vegas, Nevada. According to Tommy, approximately 45,000 members will ratchet up the "deafening" sounds of Vegas for one week in July.



Mr. Tim Harvey, C-130 electrician, is going to Disney World with his wife (the kids are grown). Assistant pastor for his church, Tim will also feed the homeless and continue his outreach to the less fortunate.



Ms. Felecia Holmes, a human resources specialist, will root for her daughter Rachel who competes in club basketball tournaments. Summer competition will take them to San Diego, Portland and Phoenix.



Ms. Becky Anaya, a tooling & special assets supply technician, is attending her high school reunion in Belleville, Illinois.



Mr. Chris Johnson (left) plans on tubing the Salt River, camping and kayaking. Mr. Larry Copeland, assigned to Hill AFB, will see the sights of Arizona from his motorcycle. First stop, Tombstone. Both Chris and Larry are egress mechanics.

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