

Serving the men and women of the 434th Air Refueling Wing, Grissom ARB, Ind.



Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Mark Orders-Woempner

A master sergeant listens intently as Brig. Gen. Dean Despinoy, 434th Air Refueling Wing commander, talks to members of the 434th Air Refueling Wing during a commander's call held in August. General Despinoy thanked Grissom personnel for their hard work and dedication during a time when the wing is in a 'high ops tempo' while preparing for an ORI, mobilizations and staff assistance visits. The general also discussed other issues that will affect Grissom Airmen in both the short and far terms.

Grissom medics augment hospital at Mountain Home

By SSgt. Chris Bolen
Public Affairs Staff

Medics from the 434th Aerospace Medicine Squadron headed west for an annual tour deployment to Mountain Home Air Force Base, Idaho. They worked at the base July 11-25. For some it was more than just a typical annual tour.

"It provided very valuable training with an active duty unit," explained Master Sgt. Margaret Wallace, a health services technician and a Grissom team member. "We were also able to help the 366th Medical Group in its mission to support the fighter wing based there."

"Our team members trained and assisted in many areas at the base hospital," noted Master Sgt. Brad Marcum, medical technician. "We assisted the 366th Medical Group to fulfill their active duty mission and prepare for an upcoming health service inspection."

That mission also includes deploying personnel all over the world. "We assisted in preparing Airmen to deploy," Sergeant Wallace noted.

Sergeant Marcum provided training to Mountain Home staff on mental health care with an emphasis on workplace violence awareness as well as self aid buddy care.

"Our team had many people from different disciplines," he noted. "We were able to teach as well as learn."

Grissom's Airmen worked all over the hospital. "We were really able to

Please see 'Medics', page 3

Paying respect isn't easy, but worth it

Staff Sgt. Mark Orders-Woempner
Public Affairs staff

The sun beat down against layers of blue cloth as my body slowly baked, waiting for the moment of truth. At first, a faint rumble of a C-130 Hercules could be heard in the distance. With each passing moment, it became harder to distinguish between the sound of aircraft engines and my heart beating louder.

Faster, and faster and faster it beat. Suddenly, the fateful aircraft touched down and my heart ground to a halt. This was the moment. This is when training became reality, and reality brought with it the sobering importance of this time and place.

Flash back four days earlier, and I find myself getting uniform items squared away and order issues ironed out as I prepare to leave Grissom for base honor guard training at Youngstown Air Reserve Station, Ohio.

I quickly assembled the items I needed and met both Master Sgt. Timothy Wood, noncommissioned officer in charge of the Grissom Base Honor Guard, and Staff Sgt. Anthony Abney, 434th Maintenance Squadron crew chief, at base lodging. With a quick exchange of names, numbers and goodbyes, Sergeant Abney and I found ourselves on an 8-hour trek into the unknown.

We arrived at Youngstown late at night and quickly parted ways since we had to get up early to be on time for training. Early the next morning we traveled together to our training

facility, a C-130 hanger and met our instructor, Staff Sgt. Danielle Lytle, NCOIC of honor guard training at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio. At first it was just the three of us, but slowly more arrived for the training that would leave a lasting impact on our lives.

The gravity of what was to come was foretold by Capt. Scott Allen of the Youngstown Base Honor Guard as he delivered opening remarks to us.

“Take this training seriously; as serious as if we were really performing these ceremonies for someone who had served their country and passed (away),” said Captain Allen. “This is an honor, and we take what we do here seriously, because it is serious and important.”

We were called out into the hangar by Sergeant Lytle. As I walked through the door crossing from the maintenance office section into the actual hanger, a wave of history, legacy and valor hit me as I was greeted by two C-130s in their pristinely kept home. There could have been no better setting to learn how to honor those who made Air Force history than under a wing of the Air Force work-horse aircraft that has seen action from Vietnam to the present conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The shock and awe of the moment was quickly cut short as I heard sharp command voice of Sergeant Lytle call out the command, “fall in!”

The group of us quickly assembled in our ranks; my mind blazing a mile-a-minute to remember the commands I had learned six years ago in basic

training.

“Dress right, hess; redup, harms; right hace; left hace; open ranks, harch!” the commands continued. I muddled my way through this performance, keenly aware that I was different than the rest of the group, most of who had previously been trained in the ways of the base honor guard. Each of us was then inspected on our uniforms and the command to close ranks was given.

“Whew! I’m glad that’s over,” I said to myself. It was after this that the real fun began. At first, we were shown new ways of doing facing movements. Instead of feet at 45 degree angles, now my toes were forced together. Instead of pivot movements, I was lifting my feet to turn the direction I needed. I even learned not one, but two new ways of doing an about face. This was one of the most difficult parts of the training; teaching myself to forget everything I had been taught in the last six years and replacing it with what seemed a completely awkward way of doing things.

Now, to be fair, these movements are done differently for great reason, which came into play later. The rest of the first day we learned the basics: facing movements, flag folding and the different types of ceremonies. It was on the second day that we learned of our great challenge.

Early that Tuesday, Sergeant Lytle told us that we would be performing a dignified transfer. A dignified transfer is simply a ceremonious and respectful way of moving a deceased Airmen’s

Please see 'GI Bill', page 3

Heartland **Warrior**

Vol. 14, No. 9
September 2009

This funded Air Force Reserve Command newspaper is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. military services.

Contents of the Heartland

Warrior are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, or the Department of the Air Force.

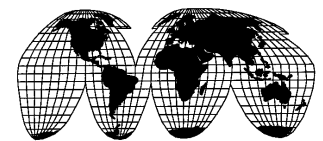
The editorial content is edited, and prepared by the Public Affairs Office of the 434th Air Refueling Wing, Grissom ARB, IN, 46971-5000.

Any questions regarding any

content should be directed to the editor (765) 688-3348.

Staff

Brig. Gen. Dean Despinoy.....commander
Lt. Col. Gary Lockard.....chief, public affairs
Capt. Kelly Howard.....public affairs officer
Tech. Sgt. Doug Hays.....editor
Staff Sgt. Mark Orders-Woempner.....assist. editor
Master Sgt. Rob Hoffman.....graphics
Staff Sgt. Chris Bolen.....staff writer
Staff Sgt. Ben Mota.....staff writer
SrA. Carl Berry.....staff writer
Penny Pearson.....administration



World Wide Web
Air Force Reserve Home Page
<http://www.afrc.af.mil>
Grissom Home Page
<http://www.grissom.afrc.af.mil>

Medics, from page 1

get them up to speed in their medical records section," she said.

Although there was plenty of training and instructing going on, the trip wasn't all work. "We were given a tour of the base, some members went white water rafting, others went horse-back riding, and some hiked up into the mountains to a World War II crash site," she added.

Lt. Col. Brian Preston and Master Sgt. Matthew Eastburn briefed the hospital's personnel on Air Force Reserve career options and benefits.

Major David Wilkins, a physician assistant received a letter of appreciation from the unit for the Grissom team's efforts at Mountain Home.

"This was a really good trip," Sergeant Wallace said. "The base personnel were great and most gracious."

An observation which, Sergeant Marcum definitely agreed with. "They were very professional and skilled," he added.



U.S. Air Force photo

Staff Sgt. Michael Allen, 434th Aerospace Medicine Squadron medical technician, assists a member of Mountain Home AFB at the patient administration office during an annual tour deployment by Grissom personnel.

Honor, from page 2

body from one vehicle to another. Normally, that Airman has died on active duty and gets full military honors.

Well, only being two days into training and having just learned an alien way to do what I thought I had known how to do for six years, I was greatly worried. After all, this was not just a practice drill with an empty coffin. We would be carrying the remains of a fallen chief master sergeant in front of his family, friends and members of the 910th Airlift Wing. We would be part of something that they would remember for the rest of their lives, and that burden began to way heavy on all of us.

We trained and practiced hard over the next day-and-a-half. Each of us knew how important this was and wanted to do it right. This would be Sergeant Abney's and my first detail, and it was such an honor to perform a ceremony most don't ever get to be a part of while honoring a man who served his country for many years.

So, there I was, on the flight line
September 2009

with the sun beating down. This was the moment. This is when training became reality, and reality brought with it the sobering importance of this time and place.

Our detail, led by Captain Allen, moved into position flanked on our right by a formation of 910th AW personnel and a junior reserve officer training corps detachment on our left.

"Bearers, tench hut!" called at Captain Allen, who then commanded us to salute the roaring machine-beast as it moved slowly by, carrying one of America's fallen heroes.

The C-130 parked in its spot, and a hearse rolled into place. The crew door opened and out came the family of the deceased. I saw their faces and the grief painted on each one. This wasn't just for the chief, this was for them.

We moved into the aircraft and slowly carried the body to the awaiting vehicle. As we performed each movement, I realized our facing movements were different. There is no way we would have been able to perform our

tasks with grace and solidarity had we been pivoting with the 800-pound casket.

As the hearse drove away and the family followed, we saluted knowing we had done our job well. And, that was the most important thing to all of us. It was at that moment that it all came together; being a part of a base honor guard is not easy, nor is the burden light. But, it is worth it.

It's worth it because for the small amount of time and energy we sacrificed we gave that family a memory they will cherish, and we gave the fallen chief the respect he deserved.

Our little group continued on with our training for the next two days and we learned a lot more about retiree ceremonies, veteran ceremonies, and more. But, for me, it was that moment on the flight line where I learned the most.

If you're interested in joining the base honor guard, contact the Grissom Base Honor Guard NCOIC, Master Sgt. Tim Wood, at Ext. 2414.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Chris Bolen

All aboard!

Civic leaders from the law enforcement community begin the loading process via a mobile stairway into a KC-135R Stratotanker prior to take off. Civic leader flights are a key in helping public leaders grasp and understand the importance of the responsibilities and mission of Grissom and its personnel.

New licenses required for GOV operation

By SSgt. Chris Bolen
Public Affairs Staff

Those wanting to use a Government vehicle must now get an Air Force driver's license.

The policy on the U.S. Air Force Motor Vehicle Operator Identification card, or AF Form 2293, was updated at the end of 2008 and has several key changes.

The first of the latest revisions requires operators to possess the revised driver's license in order to operate virtually any government vehicles including rental vehicles.

"That not only includes Grissom specific vehicles but also GSA vehicles," said Weston Smith, Grissom's transportation accountability officer.

With the recent revision all personnel must have a valid, current state driver's license and a valid AF2293

with them while operating a government motor vehicle or GMV.

"Additionally, the Air Force license expiration date will now be tied to the individual's state driver's license," Mr. Smith continued.

The emphasis is on a current license for both types of vehicles which is also tied to an individual's personal driving permit.

"The duration of the newly revised license is no longer the length of tour or an indefinite period," he noted.

"Each unit's vehicle control officer is responsible for conducting the specific vehicle training for the vehicle type needed by an individual," Mr. Smith said.

The unit VCO checks the individual's state driver's license for medical or physical restrictions and notes them on an Air Force Form 171, Request for Driver's Training and addition to

U.S. Government Driver's License, if applicable.

The unit VCO will brief personnel on: Air Force policy regarding official use, accident reporting procedures, vehicle abuse, and discrepancy reporting.

The individual will then hand carry an AF171, AF 2296, and their state driver's license to vehicle operations in bldg. 420. Vehicle operations will then validate the information and issue an Air Force license AF 2293.

When individuals leave Grissom they will no longer turn in their Air Force license. "They will keep their license and at their next duty station turn it in for review and re-issue in accordance with local policies," he added.

For more information contact your unit VCO, or base vehicle operations at Ext. 2391.

Significant changes made to fitness test starting in January

By Daniel Elkins
AFPC Public Affairs

RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE, Texas -- Approval of the new Air Force fitness instruction in the coming weeks will bring about some of the most significant changes to the Air Force fitness program in the last five years.

Those changes, which take effect Jan. 1, 2010, shift a greater responsibility of maintaining physical fitness 365 days a year to all Airmen.

In June, Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Norton Schwartz announced changes to the service's fitness program following an audit that identified inconsistencies in fitness testing that failed to create a culture of fitness required to meet the warfighting demands on today's Airmen.

"I take fitness seriously, and so should you," said Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force James A. Roy. "The new Air Force fitness test is coming soon and will incorporate significant changes aimed at creating a continuous culture of fitness."

Chief Master Sgt. Mark Long, the Air Force's enlisted promotions, evaluations and physical fitness chief, also underscored the importance of fitness in maintaining that combat capability while at the same time advising that Airmen shouldn't wait until the new year to begin preparing for the changes.

"The culture of fitness that began with earlier endeavors intended to prepare Airmen to be 'fit to fight' established a sound foundation to build upon," Chief Long said. "We've come a long way in the last five years, only now it's time to incorporate changes that will bring about not only increased fitness, but greater clarity and understanding for both commanders and Airmen."

Some of the significant changes
September 2009



Photo by Capt. Kelly Howard

Down the line

Don Windt, third baseman for the 74th Air Refueling Squadron' Fighting Red Tags, turns on a pitch and drives a shot down the left field line during the annual Jovanovich Cup softball tournament held during the August unit training assembly. The Fighting Red Tags, defeated the Dark Siders from the 72nd ARS 9-3.

outlined in the new Air Force Instruction 10-248, Fitness Program, include the testing frequency, establishment of fitness assessment cells to proctor tests and increased emphasis on the aerobic component in scoring.

The instruction is expected to be signed and approved by the Air Force

chief of staff in the coming weeks.

Until then, Airmen can learn more about some of those changes on the horizon and view the approved fitness charts and other valuable fitness related information at the Air Force fitness program Web site at www.afpc.randolph.af.mil. (AFNS)



Photo by Staff Sgt. Chris Bolen

Fresh blood

Staff Sgt. Robert LaViolette, a medical laboratory technician with the 434th Aerospace Medicine Squadron medical lab, prepares to draw blood from Senior Airman Dwayne Smith a newcomer to Grissom. Airman Smith, a prior service veteran formerly stationed at Charleston Air Force Base, South Carolina, will transition into the 49th Aerial Port Flight.

DOD, VA work to create electronic records

By Navy Lt. Jennifer Cragg
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON -- For service-members who still remember hand-carrying their medical records back and forth to appointments, the new virtual lifetime electronic record will help prevent misplaced paperwork and help providers maintain and offer quality health care, the acting director of the program said recently.

President Barack Obama, along with Defense Secretary Robert Gates and Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric Shinseki, announced the VA and the Defense Department have taken steps toward creating a joint virtual lifetime electronic record, or VLER.

"The president's vision, as he expressed that day, will permit information vital to health care, benefits and services to be available seamlessly to both departments from the moment a servicemember enters the military until the servicemember's or veteran's death," Navy Rear Adm. Gregory Timberlake, the acting director of the Defense Department-VA Interagency Program Office, said in a "DotMil-Docs" interview on Pentagon Web

Radio.

The steps to create the electronic record exchange began a little more than a year ago when the program office was established as the single point of accountability for the records in response to Section 1635 of the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal 2008.

"VLER will serve as a model for a nation, especially at this tumultuous time of health care reform, and is intended to be a lifetime, personal record for use by the servicemembers, their families and service providers to ensure a seamless continuum of care and benefits," Admiral Timberlake said.

"The president challenged the departments to work together to define and build a seamless system of integration with one simple goal: when a servicemember separates from the military, he or she will no longer have to walk paper records from a [Defense Department] duty station to a local VA health center," the admiral said. "Their electronic records will transition along with them and remain with them forever."

It also is intended to provide a framework to ensure that health care

providers have all the information they need to deliver high-quality health care, while reducing medical errors. The electronic record is a critical piece of the health care puzzle because, while the Defense Department and VA can share information electronically, it may not be easily accessible by private clinicians, Admiral Timberlake said.

"A significant amount of health care provided to [the Defense Department] and VA beneficiaries occurs by private-sector providers," he said. "So, we need the ability to make health records available to the providers who need it, regardless if they are a military, VA, or doctor within the public community."

Numerous, ongoing data-sharing activities are continuing among agencies that share information and are committed to improving health care to "servicemen and women of the present, past and future," Admiral Timberlake said.

"Every day, millions of pieces of health information are shared between [the Defense Department] and VA; however, as Congress mandated and as the departments have acknowledged, there is more work to do to make it flow smoother," he said. (AFNS)



Photo by Staff Sgt. Chris Bolen

Chewin' it up

Curtis Elburn, an employee with DMS a Grissom contract maintenance service, uses a stump grinder attached to a tractor to remove a stump left behind after the removal of a tree on base. The machine chips away the remaining tree stump leaving a pile of wood chips available for other landscaping uses.

New command

Air Force officials stood up a new major command at Barksdale Air Force Base, La., to oversee all of its nuclear forces.

Air Force Global Strike Command, will provide combat ready forces to conduct strategic nuclear deterrence and global strike operations in support of combatant commanders.

The new major command is the latest -- and largest -- reorganization in the Air Force's ongoing effort to reinvigorate the Air Force nuclear enterprise.

Late last year the Air Force established a directorate at Headquarters Air Staff focused solely on the nuclear mission.

The service also increased the size and scope of operations at the Air Force Nuclear Weapons Center to consolidate all nuclear sustainment efforts.

24th Air Force

The 24th Air Force activation under Air Force Space Command is a major milestone in the combination of space and cyberspace operations within one command.

The 24th Air Force staff will provide combat-ready forces trained and equipped to conduct sustained cyber operations, fully integrated within air and space operations.

Additionally, the Air Force Information Operations Center was redesignated the 688th Information Operations Wing and the 67th Network Warfare Wing was realigned under the 24th Air Force.

Travel site

People using the AMC military travel system can now go to <http://www.amc.af.mil/amctravel/index.asp> for the latest in AMC travel information.

The site offers prospective space-available travelers a wealth of information, including an updated AMC passenger terminal contact list (complete with phone, e-mail and Web links), and more than a dozen travel documents, example letters and brochures.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Chris Bolen

Setting the torque

Airman Matthew Steele, an electrical and environmental technician with the 434th Maintenance Squadron, utilizes a torque wrench while installing a flow regulator on an oxygen bottle.

President: Health care reform won't affect VA, Tricare

By Donna Miles
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON -- In ongoing discussions about health-care reform, President Barack Obama offered assurance to those receiving medical care through Tricare or the Department of Veterans Affairs: Your benefits are safe.

Eligibility for health care under VA or Tricare "will not be affected by our efforts at broader health-care reform," President Obama told military reporters at the White House.

President Obama said he also made that point clear after meeting with Dave Rehbein, the American Legion's national commander, and Peter Gaytan, the executive director.

"I want to make sure that message gets out to our veterans," the president said. "I think it's very important to get the message out: If you are in the VA system and are happy with your care,

great. We have no intention of changing your eligibility."

While a new, national program won't force anyone to change health-care systems, President Obama said it could offer benefits or geographic convenience that might make some veterans elect to join it. A national program "will actually give them more choices, more flexibility."

President Obama cited problems in U.S. health-care delivery systems, which he said cost more than other countries' programs and too often deliver less.

The VA "has probably made more progress than most systems out there in increasing quality" during the past 25 years, and could help shed light on better ways of delivering health care, he said.

But the cost of delivering that care is high even at VA, and Tricare consumes a big piece of the Defense Department's budget, he said.

With the fiscal 2010 budget reflecting the largest VA funding increase in 30 years, President Obama told American Legion leaders he is committed to ensuring that VA provides America's veterans the highest-quality health care possible.

Meanwhile, he told reporters the VA will increase its outreach to more veterans to make sure they're aware of their benefits and other entitlements.

"Although there are hundreds of thousands of veterans who are using our services, we know there are hundreds of thousands more who may not know that benefits are available," he said.

"And we are working really hard to make sure that every single veteran -- not just our active force, but also National Guard and reservists -- are aware of the benefits that are available to them," the president said. "Guiding them through that process, we think, is extraordinarily important."