

Heatland WATER

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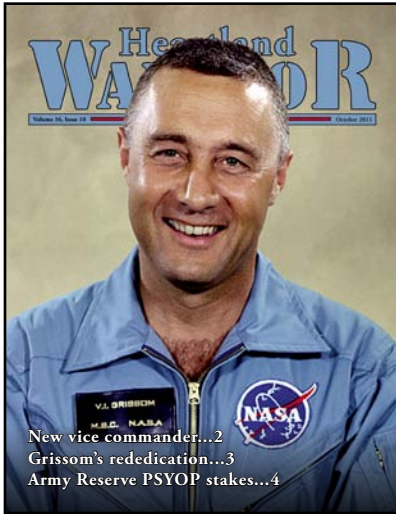
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On the cover...

Lt. Col. Virgil I. "Gus" Grissom is pictured here in this undated NASA photo. Grissom was the second American in space and the first to successfully change orbital trajectory. He was selected to be the mission commander of Apollo 1, but tragically lost his life along with Ed White and Roger Chaffee during a training mission Jan. 27, 1967. (NASA photo)

New vice commander ready to work, get 'hands dirty'

By Tech. Sgt. Mark Orders-Woempner
Public Affairs staff

Many people who are promoted to management positions are happy to leave behind some of the 'grunt' work, but for the new 434th Air Refueling Wing vice commander, he's looking forward to diving back into the thick of it.

Col. Bryan Reinhart took over as the unit's number-two man this year after spending the last two years standing up the 604th Command and Control Squadron at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz.

"That was a tough job," Reinhart explained about his time as commander of the 604th CCS. "Standing up a squadron from scratch was a real challenge, but I totally enjoyed it."

Prior to that assignment, the colonel spent time working at 4th Air Force at March Air Reserve Base, Calif., and as an admissions liaison officer at the Air Force Academy, Colo.

Despite the rewarding challenges offered by those jobs, the thing he said he missed most during that time was flying.

"Flying is a part of my definition of who I am," elaborated Reinhart, who also had to take a hiatus as a commercial airlines pilot during his time in Arizona. "Being out of the tanker for that many years, it was a little surreal getting back into it with all the familiar sights, sounds and smells of the mighty KC-135.

"It's like going from a white-collar job back to my blue collar roots," he added. "I like getting my hands dirty, and flying is a little like that."

And while the colonel missed flying during his time in the arid Arizona desert, his family missed something a little closer to home and a bit chillier.

"My family and I were ecstatic



Col. Bryan Reinhart

that we were able to move back to our hometown in Ohio," he explained. "We're looking forward to our first snow."

Looking at his new job, Reinhart said his goal is to be the best right-hand man for Col. William T. "Tim" Cahoon, the 434th ARW commander, by serving with honor and purpose, embracing the unit's goals, and fostering communication between people and the unit.

And while the colonel said people should expect the best from him, he expects the best from them in return.

"Simply do your job to your best ability," Reinhart said. "You were hired and trained for your skills and talents; you need to do your job in good character, as if your life depended on it, because maybe that day your life doesn't, but someone else's might."

Reinhart wrapped up his comments stating he wants wing personnel to know he has an open door to people and their issues.

"I'll be both attentive and decisive," he concluded. "Just ask me."

Heartland Warrior

Base remembers 'Gus' during rededication



Scott Grissom, left, and Lowell Grissom unveil a special brass plaque in honor of Lt. Col. Virgil I. "Gus" Grissom during a base rededication ceremony held here Sept. 30. (U.S. Air Force photo/Tech. Sgt. Mark Orders-Woempner)

By Tech. Sgt. Mark Orders-Woempner
Public Affairs staff

Fifty years ago a Hoosier hero strapped himself into a rocket and blasted off becoming the second American to travel in space.

This year, Grissom Air Reserve Base, took a moment to remember that man, Lt. Col. Virgil I. "Gus" Grissom, during a special rededication ceremony held here in newly renovated Gus Grissom Hall Sept. 30.

Colonel Grissom, a native of Mitchell, Ind., and one of America's original Mercury 7 astronauts, had become a hero and legend in the hearts and minds of many Americans when he first lifted off the launch pad in his Liberty Bell spacecraft on July 21, 1961.

Four years later, Gris-

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som took to space again with fellow astronaut Lt. John Young aboard the Gemini spacecraft Molly Brown. During this flight, the two conducted the first orbital flight path change, paving the way for future Gemini missions.

After his success with both the Liberty Bell and the Molly Brown, Grissom was selected to command the first Apollo mission with Ed White and Roger Chaffee. Apollo was the space program aimed at landing man on the moon, a goal Colonel Grissom not only saw as dangerous, but also of extreme importance.

"If we die, we want people to accept it," he said in 1962 when discussing the conquest of space. "We're in a risky business, and we hope that if anything happens to us it will not delay the program. The conquest of space is worth

the risk of life."

Unfortunately, that risk took hold during a launch pad test on Jan. 27, 1967, as a flash fire broke out onboard the Apollo 1 spacecraft killing all three astronauts. America mourned the lost heroes and the decision was made to remember Grissom's sacrifice by renaming an Air Force Base in his honor.

On May 12, 1968, Bunker Hill Air Force Base was renamed Grissom Air Force Base. The base was once again renamed in 1994 to Grissom Air Reserve Base as the Air Force Reserve took over host-base responsibilities.

The base's rededication ceremony began with a video showing the original 1968 renaming of the base followed by a presentation of the Colors by Grissom's joint honor guard and the singing of

the national anthem by the Peru High School Swing Choir.

In a tribute to Colonel Grissom, Indiana State Representative William Friend then read an Indiana House of Representatives Speaker's proclamation.

Keeping with the theme of remembrance, the Purdue University Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps Honor Guard performed a flag folding ceremony followed by a rifle salute and playing of Taps by Grissom's honor guard to remember all who sacrificed their lives in service to the United States. Colonel Grissom was a Purdue graduate.

Colonel Grissom's oldest son then took the stage to talk about what his father meant to his family and how he changed the world of aviation and space exploration.

"Our family is honored that the Air Force, its military servicemembers and the great people of Indiana continue to fight for freedom, and that my father's name is proudly embossed on your letterhead," he said.

Scott, who Colonel Grissom named his Korean War F-86 'Scotty' after, then took a moment to reflect on a conversation he had with his dad many years ago.

"When I was a small boy I said, 'Dad, when I grow up I want to be a pilot,'" he recalled. "He said in response, 'You can't do both.'"

The audience erupted with laughter.

See 'Grissom' page 10

PSYOP stakes challenges Grissom's reserve Soldiers

By Senior Airman
Jami Lancette
Public Affairs staff

Tactical psychological operations Soldiers rigorously train every year to be prepared for anything at a moment's notice.

This year marks the second year that the 316th Tactical PSYOP Company here has held a two-day, in-depth training competition. The stakes measure where the soldiers are tactically; as well as prepares them for future deployments.

"I think it's a good gauge to determine where they are at and to focus on different types of mission training to determine training needs," said 1st Sgt. Nick Moore, 316th Tactical PSYOP trainer.

Day one of training kicked off with analyzing where the soldiers were physically. They were put through a full physical training test, including timed push-ups, sit-ups, two-mile run and pull-ups.

Following the grueling PT test the soldiers



Staff Sgt. Christopher Deisler, 316th Tactical Psychological Operations Company, pushes hard to get as many sit-ups as he can in during the physical assessment test.

made their way to the firing range at the Indiana State Police Post in Peru, Ind., to test their ability to shoot accurately and maintain their weapons.

And, if the day wasn't demanding enough, the Soldiers ended the day's events by going on a

10-mile ruck march on the Nickel Plate Trail in Bunker Hill, Ind. Each three to four-man team roughed it with two 35-pound packs and one 55-pound pack during the timed march.

On day two, the Soldiers hit the ground running, testing their knowledge in single channel ground and airborne radio systems, using portable speakers and defense advanced global positioning device receivers. During the exercise the PSYOP Soldiers were also tested on their ability to use night vision systems and administer first aid.

During the next activity the Army reservists conducted a source, content, audience, media and effect analysis on propaganda found from simulated enemy sources.

Following up the

SCAME, the Soldiers completed a situation report on the information they gathered in the previous exercise.

Ending the strenuous stakes, the Soldiers took a final written test in Soldier PSYOP skills.

"The purpose of the training is first and foremost to build team cohesion," said Staff Sgt. Christopher Deisler, 316th Tactical PSYOP alpha team chief. "It definitely keeps you more in task, it gives you a good idea the teams strengths and weaknesses and where to sharpen those up."

Grissom is not only home to the 316th Tactical PSYOP Company, but also the 434th Air Refueling Wing, the largest KC-135R Stratotanker unit in the Air Force Reserve Command.



Soldiers from the 316th Tactical Psychological Operations Company here zero in on a target at a shooting range Sept. 16. (U.S. Air Force photos/Senior Airman Jami K. Lancette)

New Grissom IG sets sights on communication

By Tech. Sgt. Mark
Orders-Woempner
Public Affairs staff

While not part of the 434th Communications Squadron, one of Grissom's newest Airmen has definitely made communication her business.

Col. Melissa Weydert, who recently took over as the new 434th Air Refueling Wing Inspector General, said her goal is to promote open communication and try and prevent problems before they even start.

"Almost all of the problems I've dealt with between people are misunderstandings or miscommunication," she explained. "The goal is to get to the source of the problem and defuse it so we don't detract from the mission."

As a wing-level IG, Weydert serves as an extension to the 434th ARW commander by acting as his eyes and ears and being alert to issues that affect the organization.

Weydert said reserve organizations pose unique situations because of how long many reservists

stay with one unit, but they also offer solutions through clear communication and relationship bonds.

"Reserve units are like a family, and we need to work hand-in-hand," she explained. "As reservists, our people stay together a long time and little issues can fester over time."

And, Weydert said she knows the best remedy to prevent festering issues.

"My goal is to keep those lines of communication open and ensure all required guidance is followed," she explained. "The reserve rules can be very confusing for the average reservist, but when folks understand the process, they may not like the answer, but they will know they were treated correctly."

It's both the closeness and openness found in the Air Force Reserve that is the reason why Weydert said she is happy to be at Grissom.

"I'm thrilled getting back to the traditional reservist world," exclaimed Weydert as she talked about returning as a traditional



Col. Melissa Weydert

reservist after leaving that role to become an individual mobilization augmentee. "I missed the camaraderie in the unit world."

Traditional Reservists are the most common of Air Force Reserve Airmen. They're assigned to a single unit and work one weekend a month on unit training assemblies as well as 15 days per year in annual tour status.

To continue her career, Weydert left the "TR" world to become an IMA reservist when a family move forced her to relocate to the other side of the United States. IMAs are assigned directly to a regular Air Force unit and often don't have the opportunity to work with other reservists.

"It has been fun working with active duty, but it's just not the same as being in a reserve unit," she explained. "This is where I started in the reserve and where I wanted to finish."

Now that Weydert is back where she wants to be, she said she's ready to pull up her sleeves and get to work. Her primary responsibilities include administering a complaint resolution process and proactively training Airmen about IG processes and fraud, waste, and abuse issues.

"I'm here to help," she concluded.



Col. Melissa Weydert, 434th Air Refueling Wing inspector general, briefs Airmen new to Grissom about what they can expect from her as the IG during a recent newcomers orientation class. As a wing-level IG, Weydert serves as an extension to the 434th ARW commander. (U.S. Air Force photo/Maj. Kelly Howard)

Congressional staffers tour Grissom

By Senior Airman
Jami Lancette
Public Affairs staff

Grissom welcomed U.S. Congressional staff members as they toured the base Aug. 9.

Jack Middleton, director of community relations for Congressman Dan Burton; Katie Wachtler, executive assistant for Congressman Dan Burton; and Nathan Fenstermacher, legislative director for Congressman Joe Donnelly, toured Grissom and got a first-hand look at some of the resources the base has to offer.

The congressional staffers stopped by the Grissom Inn and got a chance to see the amenities that lodging has to offer the troops.

They then visited Grissom's radar approach control facility and observed air traffic controllers managing civilian,



Congressional staff members visit the Grissom radar approach control flight instrument rule room during their visit here Aug. 9. (U.S. Air Force photo/Senior Airman Jami Lancette)

military and commercial aviation above Grissom between Chicago and Indianapolis. They also got a chance to take their

turn in the air traffic control simulator.

The goal of the tour was to help the staffers gain perspective on

the daily operations of Grissom and the role that it has not only in the military, but in the community.

October is Energy Awareness Month

By Tech. Sgt. Doug Hays
Public Affairs staff

The Air Force is the largest consumer of energy in the federal government. The service spends approximately \$1 billion just for the energy it takes to run the facilities.

That fact is highlighted even more in October as this is National Energy Awareness Month.

By saving three percent of the annual energy costs, the Air Force will save nearly \$30 million.

The 2011 Energy Awareness Month theme is: "Turn Words into Action—Turn Action into Results."

Wise energy attitudes, behaviors, and organizational decisions ensure

results. The Air Force is encouraging members to take time to review their daily routines to conserve energy and empower others to take action.

"Being a good steward of resources should become one of your daily goals," said Sam Pier, a mechanical engineer with the 434th Civil Engineer Squadron and Grissom's energy conservation manager. "Energy conservation is everyone's responsibility."

"If you need a rule to help you make energy conservation decisions, try this one; use our resources as if you are personally paying the bill," he said.

For more information, on saving energy contact Pier at 688-4572.

Energy tips

To help, Air Force officials offer five things that can help secure a clean energy future at work and at home:

1. Choose Energy Star appliances and Energy Star rated office equipment.
2. Make the switch to compact fluorescent bulbs
3. Set back thermostats – this alone can save up to 25% of heating and cooling costs.
4. Turn off lights, computer monitors, printers when not in use
5. Slay the energy vampire -- turn off power strips and unplug unused wall chargers

AF C-130s fight wildfires north of Houston

By Staff Sgt. Stephen Collier
302nd Air Expeditionary Group

Air Force C-130s delivered needed fire retardant to ground fire crews who were focusing their efforts on a wildfire north of Houston.

Aircrews manning four C-130 Hercules aircraft dropped approximately 27,000 gallons of fire retardant against Fire 898, a 1,400-acre fire burning 25 miles east of College Station in Walker County, Texas. The fire's rapid growth, fed by afternoon winds, forced wildfire officials to direct Modular Airborne Firefighting System, or "MAFFS", aircraft to the area.

An unknown number of structures were threatened by the blaze.

Lt. Col. Robert Fairbanks, a MAFFS-certified C-130 pilot who flew fire retardant to Fire 898, said it was pretty obvious how dry south and east Texas are just by flying over it.

"You can tell these fires are going to be a challenge with the amount of timber and pines in the area," Fairbanks said. "We've been flying along side helicopters and single engine air tankers that have already been out here, so it's good we can all bring in enough retardant to draw that line that keeps the fires from spreading. Our ability to help contain the fires with support to the guys on the ground is very important."

The Airmen and the Modular Airborne Firefighting

System-equipped C-130s are assigned to the 302nd Air Expeditionary Group, based at Austin-Bergstrom International Airport in Austin, Texas.

The Sept. 13 retardant drops against the Walker County fire bring the total amount of MAFFS support in Texas to 45,000 gallons since aircraft and personnel arrived in Austin Sept. 10. Numerous fires throughout Texas are the result of 95 percent of the state being identified as having extreme drought conditions. Of those counties, 81 percent have been placed in the exceptional drought category, the most severe available.

The U.S. Forest Service MAFFS units are a self-contained, portable aerial firefighting system, which can discharge 3,000 gallons of water or fire retardant in less than five seconds, over an area one-quarter of a mile long by 60 feet wide. Once a load is discharged, the MAFFS system can be refilled in less than 12 minutes.

The Airmen and aircraft, assigned to the Air Force Reserve's 302nd Airlift Wing and the Air National Guard's 145th Airlift Wing, are deployed to the Austin-Bergstrom Airport to assist with battling the worst wildfires in Texas history.

The 302nd AEG currently has assigned six C-130 Hercules aircraft and more than 90 Airmen based in both Texas and Idaho.

For more information on fires throughout Texas, visit www.nifc.gov or www.txforests.tamu.edu.



Assigned to the 302nd Air Expeditionary Group, the Airmen worked to launch aerial firefighting aircraft in support of a 1,400-acre fire 25 miles east of College Station, Texas. (U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Stephen Collier)

Veterans relive past, tour Grissom



Greg Zolezzi and Jerry Uranker share a laugh as they sit in the Humvee during a tour at Grissom Sept. 7

**By Senior Airman
Jami Lancette**
Public Affairs staff

Veterans were given the opportunity to remember their time in service and get a first-hand look at the progress that has been made in today's military.

Members of the Britton Falls Veterans group from Fishers, Ind., visited Grissom Sept. 7.

Their first stop was a tour of the U.S. Army Reserve center. During that visit they were able to look at various weapons that the 316th Tactical Psychological Operations

Company has as well as climb into a specially modified Humvee used for psychological operations.

Next the group also got an up-close look at an Air Force Reserve KC-135R Stratotanker, the Air Force's primary refueling aircraft. The members were briefed on the history and the role a Stratotanker has in the mission.

The goal of the tour was to help the veterans gain perspective of operations here and the role that Grissom has not only in the military, but in the surrounding community.



Members of Britton Falls Veterans group, visit the U.S. Army reserve's 316th Tactical Psychological Operations Company here Sept. 7.



Members of the Britton Falls Veterans group receive a briefing by Chief Master Sgt. Jeff Maier in front of a KC-135R Stratotanker Sept. 7. (U.S. Air Force photos/Senior Airman Jami Lancette)

President gives Air Force b-day message



President Barack Obama thanked Airmen for their service and congratulated them on the Air Force's 64th birthday. The Air Force was established in 1947. (File photo)

By Barack Obama
President of the United States

I send greetings to all those celebrating the 64th birthday of the United States Air Force.

As president, I have no greater honor than serving as commander in chief of the greatest force for

peace and security the world has ever known. Performing their duties with impeccable gallantry and excellence, members of the United States Air Force embody the highest ideals of our nation.

Since America's earliest forays into flight, brave patriots have answered the call to defend our

way of life from the skies above. Serving in times of war and peace, these guardians of freedom and justice have kept our people safe and strengthened our security at home. Our Airmen have also exemplified our spirit of compassion abroad, from bringing hope to a divided Berlin to aiding a recently devastated Japan.

Today, we pay special tribute to the 9/11 Generation -- the more than 5 million Americans who have worn the uniform over the past 10 years. These service members have contributed immeasurably to the excellence and professionalism of the United States Air Force. Tour after tour, they have borne the extraordinary burden of a decade of war. They have written their own remarkable chapter in the narrative of America's armed forces and earned a place among our greatest generations. It is with unending gratitude that we pledge to serve them and their families as well as they serve us.

On behalf of a grateful nation, I thank you for your service. May God bless and protect you and your families, and may God bless the United States of America.

Leaders issue Air Force birthday message

Secretary of the Air Force Michael Donley, Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Norton Schwartz and Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force James Roy issued the following message to the Airmen of the U.S. Air Force:

On September 18, 1947, our nation established the U.S. Air Force, thus realizing our forebearers' vision of an independent air service to provide global airpower for the nation. Our proud organization has come a long way since that historic and auspicious occasion. Today, America's Airmen continue to build upon a tremendous heritage of integrity, service, and excellence.

On this -- and every -- day, we express sincere gratitude for your service and sacrifice and that of your families. Your dedication to mission and devotion to duty are unparalleled in equal measure to the full range of vital air, space and cyber capabilities that we provide to our joint and coalition teammates and to the nation.

As we work together building an even brighter tomorrow, please join us in proudly celebrating the 64th birthday of the U.S. Air Force. As always, we sincerely thank you and your families for all that you do.



U.S. Air Force celebrates its 64th Birthday, Sept. 18, 2011. (U.S. Air Force graphic/Tech. Sgt. Bennie J. Davis III)

As we work together building an even brighter tomorrow, please join us in proudly celebrating the 64th birthday of the U.S. Air Force. As always, we sincerely thank you and your families for all that you do.

Grissom, from page 3

"For all of you who are in love with aviation I will simply say to you never grow up," he said, addressing Grissom's Airmen. "Keep that spirit of youth in everything you do; life is too short."

Lowell, Colonel Grissom's youngest brother, echoed Scott in saying that flying was his brother's life, and that he would've loved that an Air Force Base was named in his honor.

"It's heartwarming to see people who still remember Gus and what he did," he added.

Col. William T. "Tim" Cahoon, 434th Air Refueling Wing commander, then addressed the audience, talking about Colonel Grissom as a hero and why he thought it necessary to remember him in a permanent way.

"I remember the excitement. It was every little boy's dream to become an astronaut," Cahoon said as he recalled watching Grissom and other astronauts lift off into space as

a child. "We don't have enough heroes today."

The ceremony wrapped up as Cahoon invited both Grissom relatives to unveil a bronze memorial plaque that was installed later that day at the base's parade grounds.

After the ceremony, Scott and Lowell, along with other Indiana civic leaders and elected officials took part in base tours that included stops at a KC-135R Stratotanker flight simulator, a KC-135 undergoing

maintenance repair and Grissom's radar approach control facility, which controls all civilian and military air traffic between Chicago and Indianapolis, going as far west as Lafayette, up to 10,000 feet.



Lowell Grissom, brother of Lt. Col. Virgil I. "Gus" Grissom, talks of how his brother would be honored to have an Air Force base named after him during a base rededication ceremony here Sept. 30. (U.S. Air Force photo/Tech. Sgt. Mark Orders-Woempner)

In the limelight

Medals

Meritorious Service Medal -- Lt. Col. Stephan J. McManus, 434th Air Refueling Wing; Chief Master Sgt. Kirk Bireley, 434th Security Forces Squadron; Senior Master Sgt. Andrew McLean, 434th Operations Group; Senior Master Sgt. Juanita Withrow, 434th Force Support Squadron; Master Sgt. Donald Flemming, 434th Civil

Engineer Squadron; and Master Sgt. David Perryman; 434th CES.

Commendation Medal -- Lt. Col. David Smith, 434th OG; Master Sgt. William Mezel, 434th SFS; Tech. Sgt. Catherine Devine, 434th SFS; Tech. Sgt. Nathan Salvagni, 434th SFS; Tech. Sgt. Thomas Sawyer, 434th SFS; Staff Sgt. Dustin Devine, 434th SFS; Staff Sgt. Benjamin Mota, 434th

ARW; and Staff Sgt. Debra Strong, 434th FSS.

Air Force Achievement Medal -- Staff Sgt. Adam Childers, 434th SFS.

Promotions

Master Sergeant -- James Goodman, 434th Maintenance Squadron; and Charles Stetter, 434th MXS.

Technical Sergeant -- Michael Maddux, 434th



Aircraft maintenance Squadron; Ross Havrick, 434th SFS; and Michelle Farris, 434th Logistics Readiness Squadron.



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