

BULL'S EYE

Westover sets up
central hub in Spain,
aims for improved
Mideast airlift

page 4

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BLOOD DRIVE >> Sgt. Maria Graves, a member of the Marine Air Support Squadron-6, donates blood at the Nov. 15 Red Cross Blood Drive. The event, initiated by the civilian personnel office, was a record-breaker for the wing. (photo by Master Sgt. Anne Ward)

EDITORIAL | Remember your role in the mission



General Farris

What is our mission? The mission of the Air Force is to “fly and fight,” but just what part do Westover and the 439th play in accomplishing that mission? More importantly, what part do YOU play?

Many of you may wonder how your job impacts the wing’s ability to get those big C-5s off the ground. Or perhaps you have not yet made the connection between your role in the wing’s ability to send Airmen to war.

While it is easy to see the impact the wing’s mechanics and aircrews have on our flying mission, I assure you, every job at Westover is critical. More importantly, every person filling those jobs can make or break our effectiveness in today’s fight.

For instance, if one of our food preparers in services cooks a meal for one of

my aircraft mechanics and he gets sick while turning a wrench on a C-5 on a day the airplane is delivering life-saving food and supplies to families as part of a humanitarian mission, lives could be unnecessarily lost.

If someone in finance or personnel fails to pay attention to detail on paperwork for a deploying aerial porter, it could delay and possibly keep that Airman from getting into country. And one less set of hands moving cargo and people can be detrimental and an unnecessary burden on the rest of the team.

I could go on and cover every Air Force Specialty Code in the wing but I am sure you get the point.

My message is: Always take your job seriously, no matter what it is. YOU are the deciding-factor in reaching mission accomplishment or mission failure.

On another note, it has come to my attention that many of our Airmen don’t know what our C-5s do when they leave Westover. Our crews and aircraft move large amounts of cargo and people all

over the world in support of the War on Terror and other contingencies. Usually they go to Dover Air Force Base, Del., or Charleston AFB, S.C., pick up their cargo, transit Rota Spain, head downrange (Baghdad, Balad, etc.,) and then fly the reverse route.

In fact, Page 5 of this issue contains a graphic covering our 2007 C-5 statistics.

I hope all of you understand that at the end of the day, every Patriot Wing Airman can be very proud of the job done to support our nation’s defense. I know I am. Your families, friends, and neighbors and the local community are too.

Always do your best - a lot of people are counting on you!

Brig. Gen. Wade Farris
439th Airlift Wing Commander

BRIEFS |

CFC wraps up

The Combined Federal Campaign reached \$24,867 by Dec. 11. Tech. Sgt. Ronald Case, this year’s CFC chairperson, said he will announce the final contribution at a later date. The campaign wrapped up Dec. 20.

PA gains mission

The 439th Airlift Wing Public Affairs Office gained official photo duties as part of an Air Force-wide merger.

Previously, Airmen in the communications squadron handled requests for official photo duties, including retirements, Commander’s Call awards, and other ceremonies.

E-mail 439aw.pa@westover.af.mil with a completed Air Force Form 833 to schedule a photo.

Airman wins Top 3 scholarship

Senior Airman Julie A. Novak, 439th Airlift Wing information management specialist in public affairs, earned the first academic scholarship awarded by the Top 3 Council on the December A UTA.

Airman Novak received \$150 in financial assistance as a graduate student at Anna Maria College, Paxton, Mass., where she is working toward a master’s degree in criminal justice. She previously earned a bachelor of science degree in criminal justice at the school.

Airman Novak earned the scholarship based in part on an essay on topics including her Air Force goals and community involvement.

Reveille, retreat sound daily on base

As of Dec. 17, reveille and retreat sound daily at 7 a.m. and 5 p.m.

During retreat, before the national anthem is played, all people in uniform outside should face the flag and stand at parade rest. Upon the first note of the national anthem, all military members outside will stand at attention and salute until the last note of the national anthem is played.

All civilians outside will stop, face the flag, remove headgear and place their hand over their heart upon the playing of the first note of the national anthem and will remain still until the song ends.

All drivers in vehicles will stop and sit quietly until the last note of the national anthem is played.

New hours set for base photo lab

The 439th Airlift Wing Public Affairs Office announces a schedule for booking official photos.

Walk-in appointments are from 10-11 a.m. Saturday and Sunday, and regularly scheduled appointments are from 1-3 p.m. on Sundays.

E-mail 439aw.pa@westover.af.mil with a completed Air Force Form 833 to schedule a photo.

Base parking

Reservists staying in the billeting area are reminded that there is no parking in fire lanes or handicapped spaces.

For people going on temporary duty assignments, long-term parking is located behind the emergency management office near Saunders Avenue.



ROTA ROUTE >> Rota Naval Air Station, Spain, is a common stopover destination for aircrews with the 439th Airlift Wing. Westover will soon begin a mini-staging operation from the base. (photo by Tech. Sgt. Kevin Godbout)

Westover aircrews begin full-time ops in Spain

by Senior Airman Michael Lanza

Patriot Wing aircrews are tag-teaming the war on terror from Spain.

The 337th Airlift Squadron is conducting a mini-staging operation out of Rota Naval Air Station, Spain, where they will set up a central hub in Westover's trans-Atlantic airbridge.

Nine aircrews will operate the full-time outpost in seven- to nine-day shifts, cycling in and out as Westover Galaxies touch down in Rota.

Until now, an aircrew running supplies from the U.S. into Southwest Asia would typically stop in Europe for mandatory crew rest before continuing to their destination. With

a second crew already in place, the aircraft can complete the mission while the first crew is resting.

"Normally – when the crew rests, the plane rests. By positioning the aircrews in Rota, we're increasing the velocity of the airplane. One plane can now do the job of three," Lt. Col. Patrick L. Cloutier, 439th Airlift Wing chief of safety and a Rota planner, said.

Crew rests typically add 48 to 72 hours to a mission, Colonel Cloutier said. During a stage operation, the plane can continue flying within hours after landing.

By condensing the flight times, aircraft maintainers only need to prepare a single plane for what was

a three-plane schedule.

The Rota stage operation is unique because it was planned and initiated locally. Most staging operations are tasked by Air Mobility Command's Tanker Airlift Control Center at Scott Air Force Base, Ill. Westover pilots proposed the plan to AMC in order to free up C-5s being upgraded under the Avionics Modernization Program (AMP). They needed to enhance Westover's mission capabilities while compensating for fewer available aircraft.

"We were looking for a creative way, with the assets we have, to increase our contribution to the Global War on Terror," Colonel Cloutier said. "This was a grassroots effort. As opposed to being tasked, we stood up... we volunteered... It's just another example of Westover stepping up to the plate."

Rota is operated by the Spanish Navy but used by both Spanish and

U.S. forces. The installation was selected because of its location along Spain's Mediterranean coast, in the southernmost province of Cadiz in the Andalucía region.

"It's a great location – it's pretty equidistant (between Westover and Southwest Asia), which balances out our traffic flow. It has great facilities and a temperate climate – we don't have to worry about planes being grounded because of snow," Colonel Cloutier said.

Rota is a favorite destination for veteran aircrew members as well. "Rota is probably one of the nicest places we fly to. The weather is beautiful, the people are nice and the food is good," said Tech. Sgt. Kevin P. Godbout, a 337th Airlift Squadron flight engineer.

The Rota staging operation will end when Westover's first C-5 AMP upgrades are completed in about three months.



PLAYING THE FIELD >> Maj. Kenneth A. Parsons, left, and Senior Master Sgt. James M. McKelligan, 337th Airlift Squadron, walk off the Baltimore Ravens playing field following the pre-game coin toss. The Ravens named the Airmen as honorary captains of the National League Football game, held Dec. 3. (photo by Maj. Ken Shipley)

Patriots join Patriots for coin toss

by Tech. Sgt. Andrew Biscoe

Two Patriot Wing members walked onto a football field in front of thousands of spectators to take part in a coin toss before a Dec. 3 New England Patriots and Baltimore Ravens game.

Ravens officials also named Maj. Kenneth A. Parsons and Senior Master Sgt. James M. McKelligan the honorary captains of the game. Major Parsons and Sergeant McKelligan met the captains from both football teams.

The two Airmen were among 10 members of the Patriot Wing who had front row seats for the entire game behind the Patriots bench. The Patriots beat the Ravens, 27-24.

"It was cold but they (the football players) braved it well and put on a good show for the 337th," said Maj. Kenneth M. Shipley Jr., a C-5 pilot with the 337th Airlift Squadron.

Major Shipley is a stadium supervisor at the Ravens stadium. He began his career at

the stadium several years ago as an usher. He asked Ravens officials about military aircrew members participating in a coin toss during a Patriots game this season.

"Everyone got up close to the players and got some autographs," the major said. "It was great to have the guys down in Baltimore for the game. I got a kick out of seeing them have a good time."

Lt. Col. Jeffrey F. Hancock, also with the 337th, assisted Major Shipley in the coordination of the event.

"Ten of us from the 337th had field passes for the game with two individuals being selected to participate in the coin toss," Colonel Hancock said. "The team asked us to be in flight suits for the game."

Also on hand to see the Patriots play were Lt. Cols. Michael Smith and Darcey J. Thureson, Capt. Corey D. Aiken, Master Sgts. Todd T. Holt, Richard A. Jedrey, Steven G. Peterson, Mark R. Silva, and Tech. Sgt. James M. Griffin.

2007 statistics

Patriot Wing C-5s fly worldwide strategic airlift missions that primarily originate from Dover Air Force Base, Del., and Charleston AFB, S.C. Most of these missions support American and coalition warfighters in Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom.

Other common missions in 2007 included Operational Readiness Inspection airlift support flights to Volk Field, Wisc., and Savannah, Ga.; and support for President Bush.

>> By mid-December 2007, 337th Airlift Squadron aircrews flew more than 5,400 hours and hauled more than 14,650 tons of cargo.

>> Patriot Wing aerial port Reservists processed more than 3,500 passengers and moved more than 2,850,000 pounds of cargo through Westover in 2007.

>> By mid-December, there were more than 300 military members activated or deployed. Nearly 200 more Reservists will deploy in January.

(Statistics compiled by Tech. Sgt. Andrew Biscoe; graphic by Master Sgt. W.C. Pope, 439th AW Public Affairs)



"Having all of my set personal and professional goals and tasks completed."

Tech. Sgt. Sirita L. Williams
mission support



"To clean my desk off by Dec. 31."

Diane M. Lessard
civilian personnel



"To come home safe from my deployment."

Airman 1st Class Brendan J. Townsend
security forces

TROOP TALK | What would you like to accomplish in 2008?

READY TO GO

Senior Airman Mike Silba and nearly 200 other Westover Reservists will deploy in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom in early 2008. (photo by Senior Airman Michael Lanza)

ToWar

Starting early in 2008 the Patriot Wing will enter a new phase in the war on terrorism. Almost 200 Airmen from three squadrons will deploy in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom in the first months of the year.



Editor's note: This is the first article in a series on the deployments of three Airmen, with Master Sgt. Tom Allocco reporting on Senior Airman Mike Silba Jr., Capt. Justin Manna reporting on Staff Sgt. Stephanie E. Acosta and Maj. Jennifer Christovich reporting on Master Sgt. William V. Hamm Jr.

The Rookie

For Senior Airman Mike Silba Jr. the tough part of gearing up to deploy with the 439th Security Forces Squadron was telling his mother.

His father, a Coast Guard retiree, took the news stoically. But for a mother of a 19-year-old it is impossible to hide the anxiety of sending her child in harm's way.

It took Airman Silba a while to screw up his courage for the uncomfortable talk with his mother.

"I called my dad that day and let him know and waited a couple weeks to tell my sisters....I waited a few months to tell my mom because I figured it would upset her. "She was upset...there was not a lot I could say in our first conversation. Now she is not any happier, but has come to accept

the fact that it's going to happen," Airman Silba said.

Airman Silba, just as all deploying Airmen, learned early that besides packing and paperwork, orders to the area of responsibility change everything.

It started on a summer UTA when instead of the usual Saturday morning briefing, Maj. Wesley A. Thiel, 439th SFS commander, stood in the front of a classroom and told security forces members to get set to deploy early in 2008. The room "got pretty quiet" as each Airman weighed the implications of being away for six months or longer, the security forces apprentice said.

"I think the younger troops were worried more about school, being taken away from their jobs, being away from friends for a long time. For those with wives and children, I'm guessing that their first concern was how a deployment would affect their spouses and children and planning for the welfare of their family when they were gone," Airman Silba said.

Like others, Airman Silba had a foot in two different worlds from the time he got the word. He was, he said, proud to shoulder a duty with his squadron, and at the same time concerned about leaving school and friends.

He is a criminal justice major at the University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth who took time out from school for basic training and tech school. "Originally I thought it's going to be tough to miss a semester of school and I'm going to have to catch up on work even more because I already missed a semester. It's going to be tough to be away from home, family and friends for an extended period of time," he said.

Approaching the time of deployment, Airman Silba and the other security forces cycled through a schedule of training preparations. They made sure wills and immunizations were up-to-date and spent days at the range with the M-4 carbine, the 7.62mm M-240B machine gun and M-203 grenade launcher.

Training with his squadron members focused Airman Silba on the road ahead and buoyed him to accept the challenge. "It would be great to finish school on time, but it is important to go on the deployment,"



Sergeant Acosta (photo by Capt. Justin Manna)

"We are the first people wounded Soldiers see when they arrive, and the last people they see when they leave."

he said.

"The positive thing is that I get a chance to serve my country. In my eyes, if I go over there I'm protecting my family and friends and the communities I live around," he said.

The Mother

Staff Sgt. Stephanie E. Acosta, a medical technician with the 439th Aeromedical Staging Squadron, is preparing for her unit's deployment to Iraq this winter.

Along with checking the usual deployment boxes such as mobility bag preparation, "9 mil" training and immunizations, Sergeant Acosta is preparing her family for the deployment as well.

While Sergeant Acosta is a dedicated Airman, she is also a devoted mother and spouse. Sergeant Acosta has a six-year-old son and a husband who she will be leaving for her four-month mission to Southwest Asia.

When asked how she is preparing her son, Sergeant Acosta said, "I have not told him yet, but I think he will be okay. He is much more of a Daddy's boy than a Mommy's boy so I think everything will be fine, but I will miss the both of them very much."

That said, when news of a possible deployment hit, Sergeant Acosta made sure the 439th ASTS knew she was ready. "We've known for 2 1/2 years were going. When I found out, I made sure they knew I was volunteering. I constantly told them to make sure I was at the top of the list," Sergeant Acosta said.

When talking with Sergeant Acosta, one clearly understands the important place family has in her life and how family influenced it. Sergeant Acosta comes from a decidedly military family, but from one of a more "green" persuasion. Sergeant Acosta is the only Air Force member in a family of Army Soldiers.

However, it was this family of Soldiers that helped Sergeant Acosta become an

Airman. "I knew I wanted to join the military, but I couldn't join the Air Force active duty because I was a single mother at the time, so I asked what could put me on orders in the reserves for the longest period of time. That's how I became a med tech. My mom, who is in the Army, helped me make this decision." Sergeant Acosta said.

Since enlisting five years ago, Sergeant Acosta has grown to love her career field. However, this was not always the case. "Before I joined I wanted nothing to do with medical. Things inside should be inside and things outside should be outside," Sergeant Acosta said.

Now, she wouldn't want to do anything else. In fact, Sergeant Acosta is currently pursuing a nursing degree.

"I have really fallen in love with the medical field," she said.

While deployed, Sergeant Acosta will work in a contingency aeromedical staging facility (CASF). This serves as a transition from medical facilities in the Operation Iraqi Freedom area of responsibility to hospitals in Europe or the United States. Sergeant Acosta will comfort patients by re-dressing bandages, changing IVs, re-suturing and providing other medical preparations to patients before aeromedical transport.

"We are the first people wounded Soldiers see when they arrive, and the last people they see when they leave," Sergeant Acosta said.

While Sergeant Acosta is looking to transition to active duty, she wants to bring someone along with her – her husband. "I am trying to get him to enlist. He is very close to enlisting and we are meeting the recruiter very soon," Sergeant Acosta said. It seems that Sergeant Acosta's husband has already met one.

The Veteran

When the waves of adversity came crashing into Master Sgt. William V. Hamm Jr.'s life, he stood, unwavering and thankful. There isn't much that intimidates the 11-year-veteran who deploys to Afghanistan with the rest of the 58th Aerial Port Squadron this month.

Not after the night he rushed to the emergency room because his wife couldn't walk. In a new town, at a new job, he juggled daddy-duty, work and the hour-and-a-half drive to the hospital, for three months.

And certainly not after stepping onto the tarmac in the desert in 2002, a senior airman with two young children.

Sergeant Hamm will be the first to tell you, "It is challenges like these that shape you who you are."

One thing is certain, he is an Airman and he is ready for war.

As assistant noncommissioned officer in charge of the special-cargo-handling division at the squadron here, he will have the same job in the desert.

In 2002, Sergeant Hamm had been in the Reserve for two years after leaving active duty. So as a newly-deployed E-4, he was just making sure he did what his supervisors told him to do, he said.

This time, the combat boot is on the other foot.

Leading six Airmen here is a responsibility Sergeant Hamm does not take lightly. But taking charge of Airmen from all walks of life in a war zone, he realizes, has even greater implications internationally.

Still, he takes everything in stride. "Just as I saw in my last deployment, everyone steps up to the plate and gets the job done," he stated.

His wife, retired Senior Master Sgt. Tamara M. Hamm, now fully-recovered from the spinal tumor that took two surgeries and months of physical therapy, is a lot tougher in 2008.

Having faced the anxiety, added workload

and uncertainty that come with a wartime deployment, back in 2002, this time she knows what to expect.

And unlike his 2002 deployment, described as "shock and go," Sergeant William Hamm said the squadron had almost a year's notice, giving his family more time to talk about and prepare for his imminent departure.

Ready though she is, Mrs. Hamm realizes there will be moments when the void of her "best friend" is unavoidable.

"I will miss Will's companionship the most. Sharing a laugh together over something funny one of the kids did or said . . . [things] will be difficult without him nearby," said Mrs. Hamm.

Fortunately, the Hamm family, including 13-year-old Caitlin and 10-year-old Reilly, has a good support system nearby through both their biological and church families who will "come at the drop of a hat," according to Sergeant William Hamm.

Making it home safe after his 2002 deployment, Sergeant Hamm said his priorities changed.

"I learned to appreciate my family a lot more. Finding balance is important," said Sergeant Hamm, who proudly boasts about his 18 years of marriage.

When asked what he plans to do in his spare time during the deployment, Sergeant Hamm dismissively laughs and politely says he hopes to find time to exercise and study.



Sergeant Hamm takes a break for a photo with his family. Pictured with him from left are, son Reilly, 10, Senior Master Sgt. Tamara M. Hamm (who retired in May 2007), and daughter Caitlin, 13. (Courtesy photo)

WESTOVER PATRIOTS |



DEAL ME IN >> Senior Master Sgt. Bert Quick, 439th Operations Support Squadron first sergeant, plays cards with a veteran at the Soldiers Home in Holyoke, Mass., Nov. 29. Sergeant Quick was among more than 50 Airmen who visited the veterans at the home. (photo by Master Sgt. W.C. Pope)

Car decals scrapped

Security forces officials advise motorists that decals are no longer required for Air Force vehicles as they enter the base.

"If you have decals on your vehicle and wish to remove them, you may do so," said Maj. Gary D. Byrd, SFS operations division chief. "The only documentation required for entry to the installation is a valid military ID."

While security forces will no longer issue personnel decals to affix to vehicles, motorists must still register their vehicles with the base. All vehicle owners must have valid state registration and insurance, Major Byrd said.

Motorcycle riders need to show valid military ID and their motorcycle safety/competency card for entry to the base.

Security forces will still maintain the decals at the pass and registration office for those who require access to sister service installations, which have not begun the removal of the decals yet. For more information, call Ext. 2012.



YEARLY WINNERS >> (From left to right) Senior Noncommissioned Officer, Senior Master Sgt. David P. Jones, 337th Airlift Squadron; NCO, Tech. Sgt. Jayme L. Frey, 439th Security Forces Squadron; Company Grade Officer of the Year, Capt. Kelly Provencher, 439th Aeromedical Staging Squadron; Civilian, Mylyn Advay, 439th Logistics Readiness Squadron; Airman, Senior Airman (now Staff Sgt.) Kristen L. Pinner, 439th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron. (photo illustration by Senior Airman Michael Lanza)

PATRIOT PEOPLE |



Senior Airman Kevin J. Borgatti

NAME : Kevin J. Borgatti
 RANK : Senior Airman
 AGE : 22
 HOMETOWN : South Windsor, Conn.
 UNIT : 439th Maintenance Squadron
 POSITION : Machinist/welder
 FAVORITE FOOD : Shepherd's pie
 YEARS OF SERVICE : Almost two years
 FAVORITE SPORT : Soccer
 FAVORITE HOBBY : Watching my two kids grow and learn.
 IDEAL VACATION : Australia
 BEST WAY TO RELAX : Watching a good movie
 PREFERRED ENTERTAINMENT : A pickup game of basketball
 FAVORITE HERO : Peter Petrelli
 FAVORITE MUSIC STYLES : Anything jazz and rhythm and blues
 FAVORITE MOVIE : A Bronx Tale
 FAVORITE AIRCRAFT : A-10 Warthog
 PET PEEVE : People talking when they shouldn't
 WHAT WOULD I DO IF I WON \$1 MILLION : Pay some bills, give money to some who may need it more than myself, and then put the rest in the bank, pretending I never won anything.

AT THE CLUB >> Live music by Houseparty, a J. Geils tribute band, is set for 8 p.m. Jan. 5. Also, Changes in Latitudes, a Jimmy Buffett tribute band, returns for another performance at 8 p.m. March 1.

AT THE BOWLING CENTER >> The bowling center staff and Rising 6 members will host an Airman's Social Feb. 2 (Saturday following the A UTA duty day). Come out and meet Rising 6 members and enjoy music, discounted bowling, giveaways and more.

AT THE RENTAL CENTER >> Kick off the winter ski season by getting all the latest ski equipment from the Westover Rental Center. Skiers can select from skis, boots, bindings, hats, gloves, and goggles. The center staff also offers ski and snowboard tuning services.

AT THE FITNESS CENTER >> The Commander's Cup continues in January with 3-on-3 basketball. Unit representatives must sign up their teams no later than the Thursday prior to the event date. Team rosters should be turned in 30 minutes prior to the scheduled event start time.

JANUARY SERVICES CALENDER | www.westoverservices.com

PATRIOT PUNS |



PATRIOT PRAISES |

Promotions

Chief Master Sgt. Paul Beachell

Senior Master Sgt.

Richard G. Sandman
 Mark R. Farrington

Master Sgt.

Kenyatta I. Harris
 Richard M. Doty
 Tech. Sgt. Zaki J. Robinson

Staff Sgt.

Lui S. Puga

Tony J. Soares
 Dane R. Beckford
 Michael Graves

Senior Airman

Ciro Feliciano, Jr.
 Jesus M. Feliciano Jr.
 Justin M. Grenon,
 Robert T. Pinarci
 Patrick R. Harris
 Babcock, Jessy J.
 Carroll, Michael P.
 Edgerly, Dorian A.
 Granada, Sally
 Gagnon, Jacob K.

Leblanc, Ian R.
 Meunier, Shaun M.
 Niles, Megan M.
 Novak, Ian A.
 Stosuy, Lauren A.

Airman

Marsolais, Heather M.
 Montes, Hurguel M. A.

Reenlistments

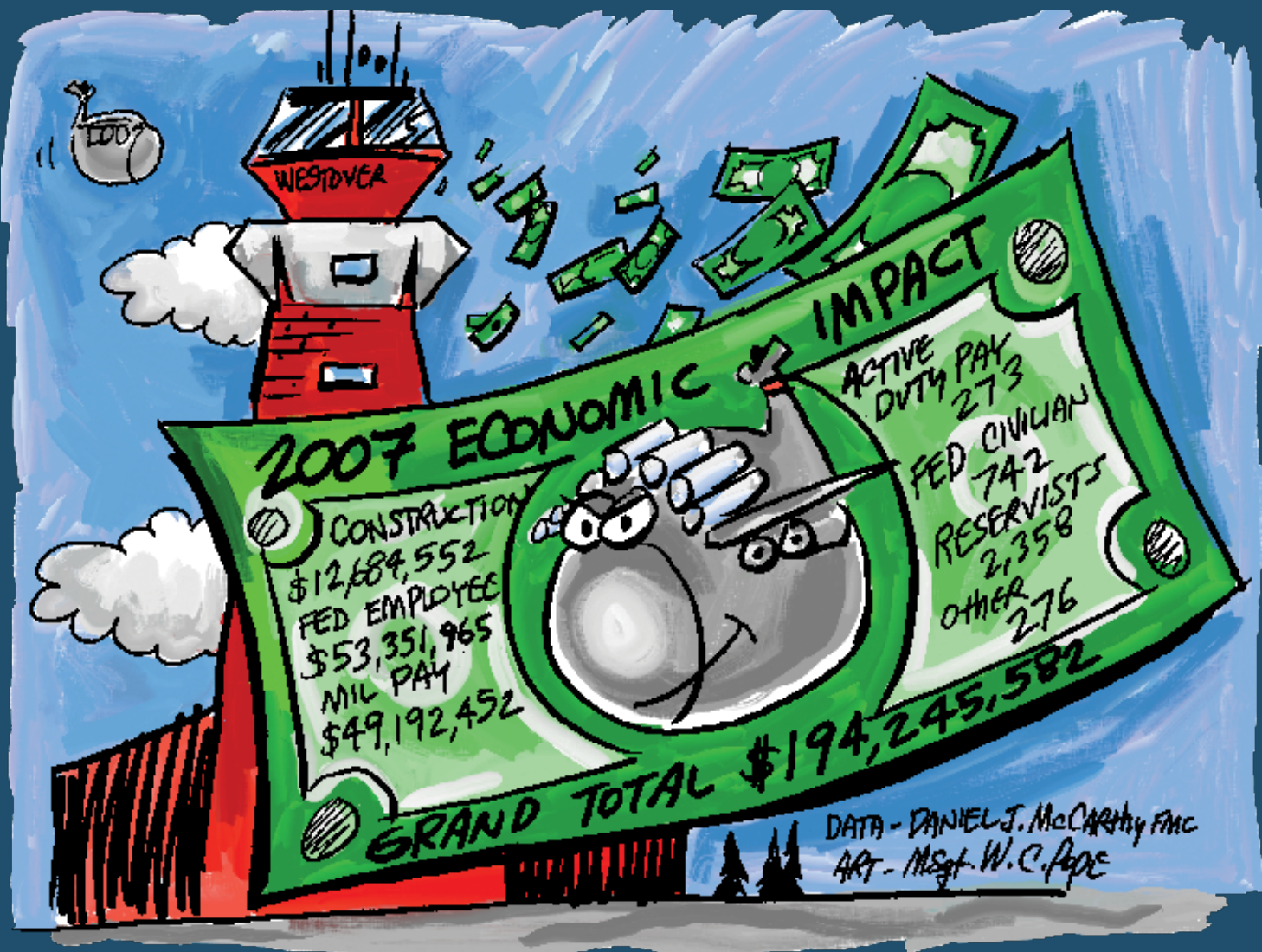
Senior master sergeant
 Anthony J. Delduco III
 Kevin D. Roux

Master sergeant

Kenneth R. Belanger
 Daryl J. Brown
 Stephen P. Butler
 Glenn G. Connon
 Robert Allan Harris
 William R. Richardson
 Sabatino P. Zano Jr.

Technical sergeant

Janet Bicho
 Partick J. Burke
 Kevin M. Kennedy
 Frank A. Manegio Jr.
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Published monthly for Patriots like Jennifer Wehr, Granby, Mass., and 3,053 reservists and civilians of the 439th AW and the wing's geographically separated unit at Hanscom AFB, Mass.

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