

# PATRIOT

439<sup>th</sup> Airlift Wing

Westover ARB, Mass. | Volume 39 No. 4

April 2012

| Patriot Wing -- Leaders in Excellence

## MORE Proposed Cuts

Great New England Air Show  
and Open House, Aug. 4-5

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**MORE CUTS >>** Turn to pages 4 and 5 for more news on the Department of Defense's proposal to cut personnel in the Air Force by October 2012. (Cover photo illustration by W.C.Pope)



**IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT** The wing bestowed Troy Cronin the honor of Pilot for a Day March 3. Troy, 14, was afflicted with bacterial meningitis at the age of 2. He suffered multiple amputations and surgeries and spent three months at Children's Hospital, in Boston. During his day of honor at Westover, Troy and his family received the "royal" treatment with a tour of the air traffic control tower, the fire house, a C-5 and the simulator. (photos by SMSgt. Heather Zackaricz)



As the newest guy among the senior leadership, I came to this job six months ago, bringing a fresh perspective to the table, and shaped

by the path that got me here.

I've been in the Air Force for 26 years and have seen and worked with all types of units at varying levels of performance, effectiveness and excellence. I'm happy to say that I can see Westover operates with can-do attitudes, synergistic teamwork and professional competence.

Shortly after I arrived, our nation called for our help, and Team Westover answered that call with excellence. We took a large contingent including aircraft, operators, maintenance and support personnel and deployed them halfway around the world to fly combat missions in support of CENTCOM.

Processing our people, getting them

out the door and then providing home station support required a wing-wide, integrated effort. Not only did we respond rapidly, but we did so in a top-notch fashion that has become the reputation and hallmark here. I am extremely proud of all of you, and I give you my sincere thanks for a job

**“Not only did we respond rapidly, but we did so in a top-notch fashion that has become the reputation and hallmark here.”**

well done! Positioning ourselves so we continue to be ready at any given time to respond when the nation calls us, is critical. It takes preparation and an active approach to staying on top of our job knowledge, training, work areas and processes.

This includes some “spring cleaning,” both literally and figuratively, of

the physical and intellectual responsibilities that pertain to your unique contribution to the mission. Just as I am sure many of you are doing at home this time of the year, I ask that everyone takes some time to take a look around and see what needs dusting off, what needs updating and what just might need a whole new appearance.

This is a good thing to do this time of the year not only because it is spring, but because we are capable of doing so. In the future our nation will call upon us again to serve. It will pay off in spades if during our normal ops tempo, we give the appropriate attention to the behind-the-scenes maintenance that keeps us working like a well-oiled machine.

With that approach, there is absolutely no doubt in my mind that when that call comes, Team Westover will bring its excellence to bear wherever and whenever needed. Truly, through teamwork we will deliver!

**by Col. Michael Miller**  
439th Operations Group Commander

**BRIEFS |**

**Commander's Cup**

April's Commander's Cup is a broomball competition beginning at 4 p.m. April 14 in the fitness center.

Join the fun and help them increase their participation. The event is held every Saturday of the A UTA at 4 p.m. For more information, call 557-3958.

**Air show updates**

Visit the 2012 Great New England Air Show and Open House web site at: [greatnewenglandairshow.com](http://greatnewenglandairshow.com) for updates on the Aug. 4-5 events.

**Rising 6 seeks award nominations**

The Rising 6 is accepting nominations for the wingman award. This award recognizes Airmen (from E-1 to E-6) for community involvement, mentorship, motivation, leadership, intervention, and integrity. The winner will be announced at the next wing Commander's Call.

All nominees will receive a letter of appreciation. The winner will receive a certificate from the Rising 6. To nominate an Airman, contact any unit Rising 6 representative.

**Sexual Assault Awareness Month**

The Department of Defense is observing Sexual Assault Awareness Month in April with its “Hurts One. Affects All.” campaign to raise awareness among service members and civilians.

Through education and training, the program creates “an environment in which sexual assault and the attitudes that promote it are not tolerated,” according to the DOD Sexual Assault Prevention and Response program.

**Motorcycle club**

Base motorcycle owners are invited to join Chapter 38 of the Green Knights Military Motorcycle Club.

The club's focus is to maintain esprit de corps, encourage mentorship, take part in ongoing rider education and skills development, and to reduce the potential of motorcycle mishaps. Those interested in joining can check out their web site [Greenknightsmc.com](http://Greenknightsmc.com).

**Base web site**

Visit [westover.afrc.af.mil](http://westover.afrc.af.mil) to read the latest news on Westover.

# FY13: AFRC plans to change 3,000 jobs

by Col. Bob Thompson  
Office of Air Force Reserve Public Affairs

WASHINGTON -- The Air Force Reserve announced about 3,000 job changes on March 6 that will realign affected reservists into growing new career fields and help the Total Force reduce manning by 9,900 Airmen in fiscal 2013.

As some Air Force reservists have to move or travel to new jobs, the Air Force Reserve plans to decrease its end strength manning from 71,400 to 70,500 people in FY13.

"We expect to lower the majority of our manning numbers through normal attrition and reduced recruiting accessions," said Lt. Gen. Charles E. Stenner Jr., chief of Air Force Reserve at the Pentagon. "As we do this, we're realigning our people into the missions that we expect to endure or be new areas of growth in the future."

Besides the reduction of 900 Air Force reservists, the Air Force plans to decrease by 3,900 active-duty Airmen and 5,100 Air National Guard Airmen. These manning cuts are part of the Air Force's force structure changes to align with the president's FY13 budget plan presented to Congress on Feb. 13.

Faced with austere budget times, the Air Force is refocusing and reducing the size of its forces to comply with the Department of Defense's new defense strategy and the Budget Control Act's requirements to cut \$487 billion from the defense budget over the next 10 years.

The Air Force's share is about \$54 billion and Air Force leaders plan to save \$8.7 billion in FY13.

"We need reservists in every Air Force career specialty in order to fulfill the nation's need for cost-effective and efficient daily operations as well as a ready global surge capability," Stenner said. "As people face career and life changing plans, we want them to know that the Air Force Reserve offers them an opportunity to continue to serve."

As the manning changes take effect, they will cause reservists to move or change units as their old jobs get realigned to new growth areas such

as nuclear, space, cyberspace, special operations, training, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance career fields.

One of the biggest changes for the Air Force Reserve Command is the planned closure of the 911th Airlift Wing, Pittsburgh Air Reserve Station, Pa. If the 911th AW is deactivated as planned, the Pittsburgh ARS is expected to close. However, the Pittsburgh Air National Guard Base is planned to remain operational.

Officials at AFRC have assistance programs to help civilians and reservists affected by these changes to find new jobs.

Traditional reservists, enlisted air reserve technicians and civil servants are encouraged to register in the AFRC Clearing House for job placement elsewhere in the command.

- Officer air reserve technicians are managed through the ART Officer Career Management Program office and can call for job assistance.

- Civil servants faced with a move due to organizational restructuring will receive hiring preferences for DOD job vacancies through the Priority Placement Program.

- All displaced civil servants are eligible for the DOD's Interagency Career Assistance Transition Program that gives them special selection priority in other government agencies.

Officials plan to announce details on further assistance programs as information becomes available. Force shaping programs may be offered if officials deem them necessary to facilitate the planned force structure changes.

Air Force plans call for the Band of the U.S. Air Force Reserve to be deactivated in FY13. The 45 active-duty Airmen assigned to the Air Force Reserve Command headquarters at Robins Air Force Base, Ga., would be reassigned to other active-duty bands.

In order for the planned manning reductions to take effect, the FY13 budget must be approved by Congress and signed into law by the president.

## DoD proposes to cut 17 positions at Westover

by 2nd Lt. Andre Bowser

Air Force officials announced March 6 a proposal to cut 13 full-time civilian and 4 part-time Reserve positions at the 439<sup>th</sup> Airlift Wing in fiscal year 2013 as a result of Pentagon budget cuts.

"It is important to remember that this is a proposal," said Col. Steven Vautrain, 439<sup>th</sup> AW commander. "The 439<sup>th</sup> Airlift Wing and Westover will remain an essential part of our national defense and an indispensable part of the local community."

In early February, Air Force officials announced that eight C-5s are proposed to be transferred from Westover in 2016. Currently, the 439<sup>th</sup> AW flies 16 C-5B models. Officials added that the fleet is scheduled to be upgraded by 2016 to the re-engineered

M-models, and that Westover would retain eight of the refurbished C-5Ms.

Lt. Gen. Charles E. Stenner Jr., chief of Air Force Reserve Command, stated that the expectation is to lower a majority of manning numbers through normal attrition and reduced recruiting accessions. Furthermore, AFRC would look to shift its people into missions that are expected to endure or to be areas of growth in the future.

Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Norton Schwartz said balancing the Total Force is key to the Air Force's future plans.

"Working with our Guard and Reserve leaders, we used a balanced approach to adjust our Total Force end strength while maintaining the ability to execute strategic guidance," said Gen. Schwartz. "We made a deliberate decision to avoid a

'hollow force' by prioritizing readiness over force structure."

To that end, Air Force leadership announced manpower changes resulting from the reduction of 227 aircraft as well as additional adjustments not tied to aircraft. "The changes primarily include the inactivation of a combat communications group and several air control squadrons, as well as right-sizing Air Force bands," according to the Air Force release.

"Achieving the right active reserve forces mix is critical for meeting our forward presence, rapid response, and high rotational demands with a smaller force," Gen. Schwartz said. "A smaller, ready force is preferable to a larger force that is ill-prepared because it lacks adequate resources."

# AF proposes changes: base-by-base

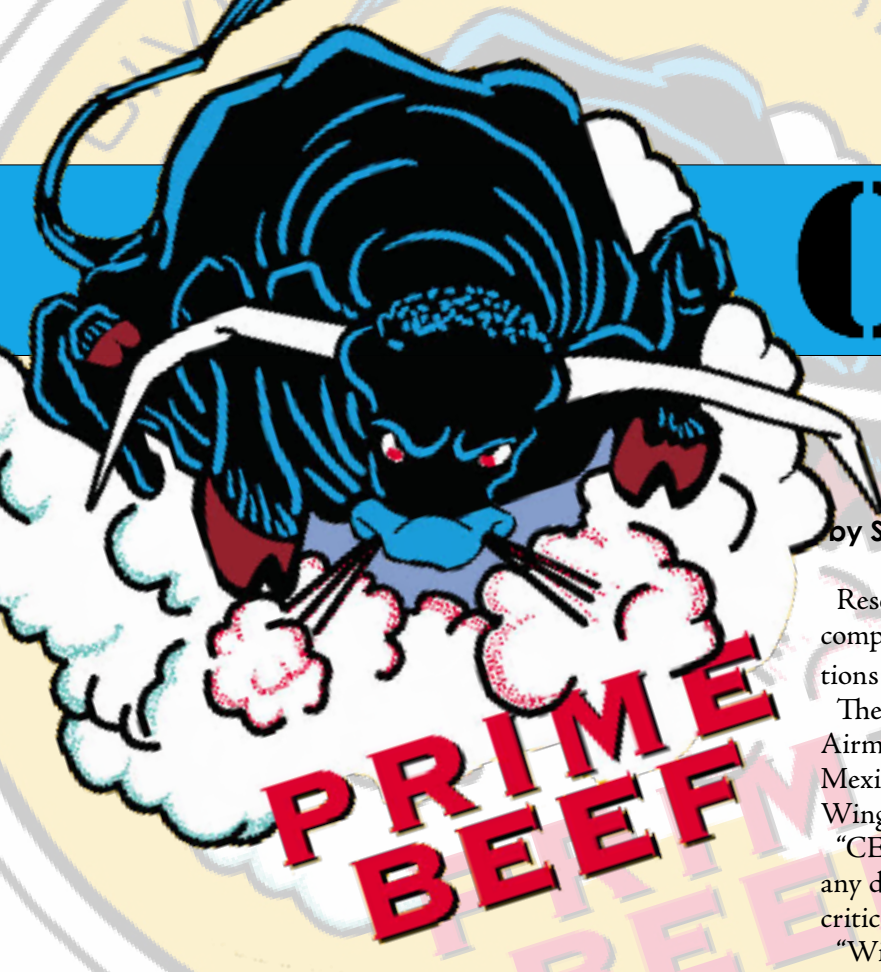
by Col. Bob Thompson  
Office of Air Force Reserve Public Affairs

WASHINGTON -- Faced with tightening budgets, the Air Force announced Mar. 6 that it is refocusing and reducing the size of its forces to comply with the Department of Defense's new defense strategy and the Budget Control Act's requirements to cut \$487 billion from the defense budget over the next 10 years.

Although subject to change, some of the Air Force Reserve's manning changes submitted as part of the Fiscal Year 2013 budget proposal include:

- ♦ **Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling, Washington, D.C.** - lose one full-time Active Guard Reserve position
- ♦ **Joint Base Andrews, Md.** - add one part-time drilling reservist position; add one fulltime air reserve technician/civilian position
- ♦ **Barksdale AFB, La.** - lose 409 part-time drilling reservists positions; lose 171 fulltime ART/civilian positions
- ♦ **Beale AFB, Calif.** - add one part-time drilling reservist position; add one fulltime ART/civilian position
- ♦ **Buckley AFB, Colo.** - lose two fulltime ART/civilian slots
- ♦ **Joint Base Charleston, S.C.** - add three part-time drilling reservist positions; add one fulltime ART/civilian position
- ♦ **Dobbins Air Reserve Base, Ga.** - lose two ART/civilian slots
- ♦ **Dover AFB, Del.** - add two part-time drilling reservist positions; add one fulltime ART/civilian position
- ♦ **Eglin AFB, Auxiliary Field 3, Fla.** - add two part-time drilling reservist positions; add two fulltime ART/civilian positions
- ♦ **Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska** - add nine part-time drilling reservist positions; add three fulltime ART/civilian slots
- ♦ **Grissom ARB, Ind.** - lose four part-time drilling reservist positions; lose nine fulltime ART/civilian positions
- ♦ **Hill AFB, Utah** - add one part-time drilling reservist position; add two fulltime ART/civilian positions
- ♦ **Homestead ARB, Fla.** - lose 40 part-time drilling reservist positions; lose 13 fulltime ART/civilian positions
- ♦ **Hurlburt Field, Fla.** - add 54 part-time drilling reservist positions; add nine fulltime ART/civilian positions
- ♦ **Keesler AFB, Miss.** - add five part-time drilling reservist positions; add five fulltime ART/civilian positions
- ♦ **Joint Base San Antonio, Texas** - lose 385 part-time drilling reservist slots; add one fulltime Active Guard Reserve position; and lose 178 fulltime ART/civilian positions
- ♦ **Joint Base Langley-Eustis, Va.** - lose one fulltime AGR slot
- ♦ **Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash.** - add one part-time drilling reservist position; add one fulltime ART/civilian position
- ♦ **Little Rock AFB, Ark.** - add five drilling reservist positions
- ♦ **Luke AFB, Ariz.** - add one part-time drilling reservist position; add two fulltime ART/civilian positions
- ♦ **MacDill AFB, Fla.** - add six part-time drilling reservist positions; add one fulltime ART/civilian position
- ♦ **March ARB, Calif.** - lose 12 part-time drilling reservist positions; lose 14 fulltime ART/civilian positions
- ♦ **Maxwell AFB, Ala.** - add two part-time drilling reservist positions; add one fulltime ART/civilian position
- ♦ **McConnell AFB, Kan.** - add one fulltime ART/civilian slot
- ♦ **Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J.** - add three part-time drilling reservist positions; add one fulltime ART/civilian slot
- ♦ **Minneapolis-St. Paul ARS, Minn.** - add one part-time drilling reservist position; lose one fulltime ART/civilian position
- ♦ **Nellis AFB, Nev.** - add one fulltime ART/civilian position
- ♦ **Niagara Falls, ARS, N.Y.** - lose one part-time drilling reservist position; add nine fulltime ART/civilian positions
- ♦ **Patrick AFB, Fla.** - add 10 part-time drilling reservist positions; add four fulltime ART/civilian positions
- ♦ **Pentagon** - lose five fulltime AGR positions
- ♦ **Peterson AFB, Colo.** - add one part-time drilling reservist position; add one fulltime ART/civilian position
- ♦ **Pittsburgh ARS, Pa.** - lose 1,122 part-time drilling reservist slots; lose 45 AGR slots; and lose 281 fulltime ART/civilian slots
- ♦ **Pope Field, N.C.** - add six part-time drilling reservist positions; add three fulltime ART/civilian positions
- ♦ **Robins AFB, Ga.** - lose 35 fulltime ART/civilian positions; lose 45 active-duty positions
- ♦ **Schriever AFB, Colo.** - add 56 part-time drilling reservist positions; add 23 AGR positions; and add one ART/civilian position
- ♦ **Scott AFB, Ill.** - add 23 part-time drilling reservist positions; add 13 fulltime ART/civilian positions
- ♦ **Seymour Johnson AFB, N.C.** - add one part-time drilling reservist position; add three fulltime ART/civilian positions
- ♦ **Tinker AFB, Okla.** - lose 61 part-time drilling reservist positions; lose 21 fulltime ART/civilian positions
- ♦ **Travis AFB, Calif.** - add one part-time drilling reservist position; add two fulltime ART/civilian positions
- ♦ **Tyndall AFB, Fla.** - add one fulltime ART/civilian position
- ♦ **Westover ARB** - lose four part-time drilling reservist positions; lose 13 full-time ART/civilian positions
- ♦ **Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base Fort Worth, Texas** - lose 40 drilling reservist positions; lose 13 ART/civilian positions
- ♦ **Whiteman AFB, Mo.** - lose five part-time drilling reservist positions; add one fulltime ART/civilian position
- ♦ **Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio** - add 49 part-time drilling reservist positions; add 11 fulltime ART/civilian positions
- ♦ **Youngstown ARS, Ohio** - lose 97 part-time drilling reservist positions; lose 33 fulltime ART/civilian positions.

To read more about the Air Force's FY13 budget and future changes, go to [af.mil](http://af.mil).



# BREAKING CIVIL EN LEAD

by SrA. Charles Hutchinson IV

Reservists from the 439th Civil Engineering Squadron successfully completed Silver Flag training and performed base recovery operations in record time at Tyndall Air Force Base, Fla.

The unit departed Westover Jan. 7, joining more than 100 other Airmen from bases throughout the Air Force, including Texas, New Mexico, Minnesota, and Virginia. With 53 members, the Patriot Wing CE team was the largest.

“CE is required to go every 40 months to Silver Flag, or before any deployment,” said Maj. Robert Russo, CES commander. “It is critical reportable readiness training.”

“With all those various installations sending Airmen, all my people were the shop leads,” Maj. Russo said.

The Silver Flag Exercise has a 74-person cadre, providing contingency combat support training to active-duty, Air Force Reserve Command, Air National Guard, Army, Marine Corps and allied nations mission support group personnel.

More than 4,500 people are trained each year at the Tyndall site.

During the week-long training, various units practice building and maintain bare-base operations at a forward-deployed location. Airmen sharpen their skills of repairing bomb-damaged runways and setting up base facilities; firefighters receive specific expeditionary training that supply the combatant commander with a highly trained and skilled emergency response force.



# RECORDS: ENGINEERS

## THE WAY



"The entire airfield, including two 40-foot craters were repaired by our Airmen, as well as the aircraft arresting barrier, and the emergency airfield lighting," said Maj. Russo. "All set up in record time to open the airfield an hour and a half earlier than anticipated!"

SMSgt. Stacy Gilman, CES first sergeant, said, "It was an outstanding trip!"

"We set a new land speed record for the exercise. The Silver Flag staff was astounded to see that."

Although typically two AFSCs are recognized for outstanding performances during the training, but this time the Westover Civil Engineers led three.

Section leaders were SMSgt. Anthony Delduco, utilities; structures, MSgt. Eric Tift, and heating ventilation and cooling, TSgt. David Hallfelder.

"The 439th CES Silver Flag Team successfully mobilized, deployed, and accomplished the Silver Flag training and certification as expected, without flaw. The cadre praised the teamwork and positive attitudes of the entire class. Everybody leaves the training with confidence," said SMSgt. Gilman.

The CE members returned home Jan. 14.

"It was a grand slam for CE," said SMSgt. Gilman, "and it was a lot of fun!"



# Vice wing commander moves on after deployment



by SrA. Charles Hutchinson IV

Just 14 months ago, Col. John Healy became the 439th Airlift Wing vice commander. In March, it was time to say goodbye.

With an impending deployment to Southwest Asia, Col. Healy spent his last UTA at Westover in March.

Col. Healy came to Westover in November 2002 from Charleston as a traditional reservist. He joined the Air Force in 1989 and graduated from pilot training in 1990. Since then, he has flown the C-141, C-17, and the C-5. He served on active duty for 12 years.

He climbed the ranks during his tenure at Westover: from flight commander to 337th Airlift Squadron commander, then on to vice wing commander.

Col. Healy took over the position of vice commander on Jan. 1, 2011 saying, "I looked at it as the next step and the last step in an operational sense before I go to a staff job."

One of Col. Healy's biggest achievements as vice commander was his involvement in the 2011 ORI. "I was in charge of all planning and exercises to do with it, and that was great!" Col. Healy added, "We did fantastic!"

Becoming vice commander was an eye-opener for Col. Healy who said, "It's amazing because all of a sudden you go from the big picture being with the flying squadron to, holy smokes, there's an entire wing out there."

Col. Healy showed emotion while talking about his exit from Westover saying, "It's tough. The people here and every sense of the mission has made my ten years fantastic. It's been the best 10 years of my career!"

Col. Healy's fini flight was March 15, when he received the ceremonial hose-down from his wife Catherine.

Although a staff job may be the next step for Col. Healy, he isn't done flying yet. In his civilian job, he's a captain for JetBlue Airways.

Asked if this was his last stop in the Air Force, Col. Healy made it clear it wasn't.

"I'm going to keep riding the horse until it kicks me off," he said.

**SPRING SHOWERS** As temperatures approached the high 60s March 15, Col. John Healy was "showered with affection" by the old Air Force tradition of hosing down an Airman after their final "fini" flight. In this case it was Col. Healy's final C-5 flight. (photo by SrA. Kelly Galloway)

## TROOP TALK | What's a common call for first responders during spring months?

"Motorcycle accidents; it seems as though people forget how to ride them after the winter months."

-- SrA. Andrew Nelson  
439<sup>th</sup> Civil Engineering Squadron



"There are a lot of chimney fires. People fail to clean and perform yearly inspections."

--SrA. Andre Sample  
439<sup>th</sup> Security Forces Squadron



"Following a long winter, people go outside and over-exert themselves and also dehydrate."

--SrA. Savannah Skiff  
439<sup>th</sup> Aerospace Medicine Squadron

photos by SrA. Kelly Galloway



# 439<sup>th</sup> Communications squadron earns best in command

by 2nd Lt. Andre Bowser

For the second time in three years the 439<sup>th</sup> Communications Squadron has earned the Air Force Lt. Gen. Harold Grant Information Dominance Unit Award, as the best communications unit in the Air Force Reserve.

The list of major accomplishment, which netted the squadron the award in 2009 and again in 2011, is extensive and includes “prolific output with high operations tempo through massive changes,” “net availability supported movements for wars: Libya Operations and counterdrug mission,” among other accomplishments noted in the award announcement.

Chief of Operations David Carbin, who also serves as the superintendent on the reserve side as a chief master sergeant, said the squadron earned the big honor by doing a lot of little and big things well.

“We do so many things on a daily basis from the large to the small and they all affect the mission every day,” Carbin said. “We’ve got people who support missions throughout the world.”

Carbin said unit members recently deployed to Alaska for a training mission, and regularly lend their expertise throughout the Air Force Reserve Command and beyond.

“We are always leaning forward and we

always push to have our people up in the front – so headquarters always sees us in the lead,” he said, describing an upcoming mission to help a unit in New Jersey set up a Joint Incident Site Communications Capability package, which allows communications squadrons to support disaster response areas where communications capability has been compromised.

“We are the lead unit in AFRC when it comes to the JISCC package,” he said

of his unit, which includes more than 70 Traditional Reservists, full-time federal employees, civilians and contractors.

Carbin said his unit offered a wealth of experience and knowledge in the communications industry, and a lot of it came from Reservists.

“My people do this stuff on the outside, including managing networks in their civilians jobs,” he said. “So, we put them to work.”



## BROWN TOUR

Sen. Scott Brown, R-Mass., takes a closer look at a C-5 in the isochronal inspection dock March 19. Senator Brown's visit to Westover also included a tour of the flight line and wing headquarters, where senior leadership provided him a wing mission briefing. (photo by SrA. Kelly Galloway)

## Pioneer Valley USO volunteers hours, services ensuring military's well-being

by SSgt. George Cloutier

The Pioneer Valley United Service Organization at Westover extends a warm invitation to all service members across central and western Massachusetts.

“The mission of the USO is to improve the quality of life for our military personnel and their families,” said Allan Tracy, Executive Director of the Pioneer Valley USO. “And that’s basically been the mission of the USO since 1941.”

The USO at Westover provides a number of services, all free, to military members and their families: a food pantry, open Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday night; home-cooked dinners Monday nights from 5-7 p.m.; holiday baskets for Thanksgiving and Christmas; troop Welcoming/Departures; Wounded Warriors; Fallen Heroes; Operation Care Package; Hospitality and Entertainment (books, videogames, movies, board games); Loan chest; Children’s Holiday Parties; Email and Internet Service and

United Through Reading.

Tracy and his staff of volunteers have a long history of providing quality of life services to the service members of central and western Massachusetts. Last year the USO of the Pioneer Valley was host to over 35,000 servicemembers and their families. Today the USO of Pioneer Valley has over 70 volunteers and provides an estimated 4,000 hours of service annually.

“The Pioneer Valley [USO] has been around for 20 years,” said Tracy. “[Ret. Brig. Gen. Mike] Walker got us set up on base here at Westover. I’m an old Marine and Vietnam Veteran, and I love taking care of the troops. There’s tons of support here for people who need it. Get it. It’s there.”

For more information on these programs and all programs provided by the USO, visit the Pioneer Valley USO at Westover at 100 Walker Avenue, next to the Airman and Family Readiness Center or visit online at [pioneervalleyuso.com](http://pioneervalleyuso.com) or call Tracy at (413) 557-3290.

## AIRMAN IDOL

# Westover reservist soars on American Idol

by 2nd Lt. Andre Bowser and SrA. Kelly Galloway

For one Patriot Wing Reservist and aspiring singer, her 15 minutes of fame stretched out over weeks as a contestant on American Idol.

The television show broadcast to millions gave TSgt. Blaire Sieber a rare opportunity to stand in front of the world and live out her dream.

"It's really hard to describe the experience," TSgt. Sieber said during a recent telephone interview. "You feel like you're on top of the world."

### AMERICAN IDOL

TSgt. Sieber made it far as an American Idol contestant, receiving marks of approval from global icon Jennifer Lopez, rock legend Steven Tyler, and Grammy Award-winning producer Randy Jackson.

This 11<sup>th</sup> season heard vocalist hopefuls from several states: including Missouri, Oregon, California, Pennsylvania, Georgia, Colorado and Texas. TSgt. Sieber said she traveled to Georgia for her audition.

"I wasn't sure that I was going to make it, so I turned it into a vacation just in case," she said of her audition in the antebellum city of Savannah.

But the audition process was no vacation: American Idol contestants endure at

least three sets of cuts; the number of people auditioning can exceed 10,000 people in each city, but only a few hundred make it past the first preliminary auditions. Those who are chosen then sing in front of producers; after another cut, contestants audition in front of the judges, which is the only audition phase shown on the show. Those selected by these judges are then sent to Hollywood.

Her American Idol experience consisted of a lot of long days.

"It's the first round that takes the longest: I got there at 5 or 6 in the morning," she said. "I don't think I auditioned until 4 in the afternoon -- and some people might not have auditioned until 2 the next morning."

All said, the odds are slim: Between 10 and 60 people in each city have a chance to make it to Hollywood.

"We all put American idol on a pedestal because it has been going on for so long," TSgt. Sieber said. "You feel like you're on this roller coaster that is perpetually moving."

The NCO made it as far as the top 42 performers out of more than 100,000 contestants who had auditioned and hundreds who

had advanced. But more impressive than making it as far as she did is the fact that it wasn't her first time making it onto the show.

"This is my third time auditioning, and second time on the show," said the certified nursing assistant who lives in Medford, Mass. "I didn't make it to Hollywood the first time." Last year, she received the coveted golden ticket to Hollywood, but was unable to advance past that first round in Tinsel Town. This year, TSgt. Sieber was one of only 330 American Idol hopefuls sent to Hollywood



week out of more than 100,000 other aspiring entertainers. She advanced through three "Hollywood Week" rounds and one performance round in Vegas, which got her into the top 42. Shortly thereafter, she bowed out gracefully.

If given the opportunity she'd do it again.

"You have to keep high hopes and say 'it is going to work out in the end,'" she said. After all, she said it's a surreal experience to

receive pointers from international superstars, such as Steven Tyler's remark about her "growl."

"He told me to 'get comfortable with that growl in your voice and become friends with it.'"

Actor/singer Jennifer Lopez told the aspiring singer to open up more.

"She told me that she wanted more from me," TSgt. Sieber said. "The way I interpreted it was that she wanted more emotion in my singing."

She said it was a challenge to compete in front of such musical luminaries.

"Before my first critique from J-Lo, I tried not to focus on whether the judges were dancing in their seats or not. They are still people you idolize — but you have to focus on your performance."

### AIRMAN IDOL

The loadmaster of eight years works in the health care profession outside of the Air Force Reserve, and she is studying to become a nurse.

But when TSgt. Sieber puts on the uniform of a Reserve Loadmaster at Westover, she said it's all military business.

"I'm really lucky because I'm aircrew and they've given me opportunities to reschedule my UTAs, volunteer for missions, and manage my Reserve schedule with a week here, a couple weeks there," TSgt. Sieber said. "That has really helped me get the hang of balancing the Reserves with my school and work schedules."

The 337<sup>th</sup> Airlift Squadron loadmaster said striking a balance between service to her country, her medical career, educational and singing aspirations was tough, but not impossible.



## Promotions

### Major

Ronald Ball  
 Ryan Biladeau  
 John Defina  
 Tania Jhamb  
 Matt Jones  
 Emily Koziol  
 Stephen Ratcliff  
 Jessica Rose  
 Stephen Sherman



### First Lieutenant

Alan Fairey  
 Julie Farrand  
 Joshua Harris  
 Mark Mannello  
 Mark Visconti



### Senior Master Sgt.

Larazo Dejimenex  
 Frederick Hetu  
 Randall King  
 Shane Newhart  
 Sabatino Zona



### Master Sergeant

Ellerie Fuller  
 Brandon Ives



### Technical Sergeant

Kenneth Wermann  
 Dominique Powell  
 Jessica Nieves  
 Matthew Whipple  
 Shannon Oleksak  
 Christopher Stanzione  
 Gerald Paquette  
 Espirito Perez  
 Michael Day  
 Susan Acosta  
 Zachary Wehr  
 Nikita Kirpichev



### Staff Sergeant

Mercy Adang  
 Cathleen Henneberry  
 Aubrie Johnson  
 Kerri Plante  
 Anamaria Posadamontes



### Senior Airman

David Babcock  
 Belmiro Bala  
 Jacqueline Bones  
 James Brosnan  
 Nathan Carvalho  
 Jose Deleon  
 Stefanie Dubourg  
 Michael Dunn  
 Samuel Hallmark  
 Edwin Hilerio  
 Frankie Houghtaling  
 Megan Lafleur  
 Jason Larose  
 Gabriel Liaigre  
 Rebeca Munoz  
 Eddie Rodriguez  
 Emmanuel Silvia  
 Jonathan Teixeira  
 Chad Thompson



### Airman 1st Class

Manuel Caban, JR.



### Airman

Ernest Awusah



## FACES OF WESTOVER

### SSgt. Kenneth Kerr

439<sup>th</sup> Airlift Control Flight

SSgt. Kenneth Kerr, 439<sup>th</sup> Airlift Control Flight, enlisted in 2005, looking for a better way to help pay for school and at the same time, give back to his country.

"The airlift control flight (ALCF) is highly deployable," he said. "When deployed our mission is to set up communications and runways ... basically open a 'bare bone' mini-base within two hours of landing."

SSgt. Kerr is a single father of three and a web designer/programmer. "Even with being a parent, employee, student and reservist I've found time to for community involvement and give back. I teach students HTML and go to area schools and talk to them about the military," Kerr said. "At basic training, the doctors asked me if I wanted to donate blood platelets that are used for burn victims and people with blood clotting problems. While there, they found that I have a high platelet count. I've been donating every two weeks through the Red Cross."

SSgt. Kerr is pursuing an online Bachelor's of Science in information technology management as it complements his civilian and military careers.

-- by SrA. Kelly Galloway



SSgt. Kenneth Kerr

## Retirements |

### Chief Master Sergeant

Lawrence Joseph Savarese

### Master Sergeant

James Patrick Rebman  
 Shawn Paul Quinn  
 Marianne Sue Monbleau  
 Thomas Robert Williams

## SERVICES CALENDER |

Submitted by Mollie Anello, services marketing assistant

**CLUB** >> Easter Brunch April 8, 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.; reservations are required no later than April 4 and can be made by calling 593-5531. Easter Egg Hunt will also be offered; Lobster Boil on April 23.

**BOWLING** >> Month of the Military Child -- Eat & Bowl Special, every Friday Night in April, Two games of bowling, shoe rental, hamburger or hot dog, fries, and soda, \$7, also free shoe rental for children 17 and under Monday through Thursday all month; Bowling Team Building Special, Come bowl with your co-workers and receive this great deal! Games and shoe rentals are only \$1! Wednesday-Friday 1 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. Call ahead for a reservation! 557-3990; Spring Break School Vacation: No plans for spring break? Come to the Bowling Center! 16-20 April 2012, 11 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. \$1 games, \$ shoe rental and Cosmic Bowling.

**OUTDOOR REC** >> NEW Items! Fishing boats, motors, and hands free kayaks! Check us out today for all the details. For more information call 557-2192.

**FITNESS CENTER** >> Westover Wallyball Tournament April 10-12 Tuesday-Thursday Start time 4:30 p.m.; Pitch, Hit & Run Sign-Ups April 3-5, ages 7-14, Day of Event April 20 at 1 p.m. at the Westover Softball Field; 3 on 3 Basketball Tournament April 24-26, Tuesday-Thursday Starts at 4:30 p.m. Sign-Ups April 17-19. Call 557-3958.



439<sup>th</sup> Airlift Wing  
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Westover ARB  
Chicopee, Mass. 01022-1825

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Published monthly for Patriots like SrA. Spencer Gatley, Keene, N.H., and the more than 3,400 reservists and civilians assigned to the 439<sup>th</sup> Airlift Wing.



**SET ABLAZE** Controlled burning at Westover took place March 3. U.S. Forest Service Wildland firefighters and Westover Ffirefighters planned safe burn practices. Prescribed fire is a recognized natural resources management tool used to maintain healthy grasslands and to reduce grassy fuels. Westover's prescribed fires will help prevent wildfires and create more suitable habitat for two state-listed rare bird species: the upland sandpiper and grasshopper sparrow. (photo by SrA. Kelly Galloway)