



# THE PATRIOT



439TH TACTICAL AIRLIFT WING

WESTOVER AIR FORCE BASE, MASS.

Vol. IX, No. 8

August 1982

## "Haugen's Heroes" win at Volant Rodeo '82



Lt. Col. Robert Motley, mission commander, proudly displays two first-place trophies from Volant Rodeo '82 (USAF photo by Capt. Philip Weber)



Victors and friends celebrate the victory

by Capt. Rick Dyer

To some they were known as "Haugen's Heroes". Others called them "The Motley Crew."

But when the dust cleared at the recent Volant Rodeo '82 competition at Pope AFB, North Carolina, the 439th competitors had earned another name — "winners".

The Westover contingent, led by Lt. Col. Robert Motley, won two of eight events during the weeklong competition, which is sponsored annually by the Military Airlift Command. It was the first time in Volant Rodeo history that Reserve aircrew won two first-place trophies.

Competing against 33 other teams from the regular Air Force, the Air Force Reserve and several foreign countries, the 439th team walked away with top honors in the short-field landing and joint inspection events.

"I'm delighted with the outstanding performance," Colonel Motley said. "We trained very hard for the competition, which is really a showcase for the best cargo airlift crews in the world," he said.

Capt. B. J. Ferro piloted Westover's C-130E through three near-perfect short-field landings. On his first attempt, the veteran pilot hit the landing line dead center and on two subsequent attempts he missed the mark by only a total of 23 feet.

Asked about his success in the short-field landing, aircraft commander Capt. B. J. Ferro answered, "I used the old T.L.A.R. technique used by all good airlift pilots". Questioned further about what T.L.A.R. stood for, Capt. Ferro answered with a smile, "that looks about right."

"We all worked together extremely well and the other guys gave me everything I needed to land on target," Captain Ferro said.

(continued on page 7)



# Chief Sicuranza is new CSG first sergeant

by SSgt. Gordon A. Newell

Chief Master Sergeant Michael A. Sicuranza has assumed his new duties as first sergeant of the 439th CSG. In this position he is also considered the base first sergeant.

"This will be a challenging assignment," said the 30-year veteran of the military. "It's a different environment from the tactical side of the house. The Air Force Reserve program is becoming more and more attuned to "people problems" and this is definitely a "people problem" job.



## Two basic functions

Sergeant Sicuranza is taking over his new position with a good idea of what lies ahead. "I look upon this assignment as having two basic functions. First, I'll act as liaison to the Base Commander for all people problems from pay to housing. Second, I still must see with the eyes of a first sergeant. What this means is I may have to chew someone out for not keeping the barracks clean, but first it will be my responsibility to see that he has a decent barracks to live in."

Sergeant Sicuranza is moving into the slot previously held by Chief Master Sergeant Henry J. Scott, who has been named Senior Enlisted Advisor for the Air Force Reserve.

The 46-year old Sicuranza has been attached to the 901st CAMS since 1972. His latest assignment was as Field Maintenance Manager. He also served as quality control supervisor and as line chief.



## Civilian AF job

Sergeant Sicuranza's civilian job is not too far removed from the military. He is employed at Hanscom AFB as aircraft modification manager for two major acquisition programs at Headquarters ESD (Electronic Systems Division).

"I've been in the Reserve program for a long time," he mused. "I've seen the program grow from a third class citizen to a good and respected voice in the Total Force. I make that statement not just as a reservist but from my civilian affiliation with the Air Force as well."

Sergeant Sicuranza joined the Air Force Reserve in 1959. Prior to that he spent three years in the Massachusetts Air National Guard. He also served five years on active duty with the Air Force.



Chief Master Sergeant Michael A. Sicuranza, the new 439th CSG First Sergeant, is shown here with Master Sergeant Salvatore Palumbo, First Sergeant of the 901st CAMS. (USAF photo by Maj. Robert Carroll)

# Mass casualty disaster staged

by Sgt. Deborah Elliot

On Thursday, June 24th, Westover hosted a mock mass casualty disaster exercise involving civilian and military emergency response personnel.

Seventy-five members of the Westover Job Corps and other volunteers were "victims" of a C-130 crash. They had varying degrees of injuries, mostly serious. Some were hysterical. Others lay dead in a grassy field near the north end of the base's runway.

Initial response to the emergency was handled by Westover's fire, law enforcement, disaster preparedness and medical personnel. The secondary phase involved response by ambulances and emergency medical personnel from neighboring communities.

In the exercise the aircraft notified the control tower of an in-flight emergency. Inevitably, however, it and 81 passen-

gers plummeted to earth. Then, as the injured evacuated the plane a new danger developed.

A fuel leak, ignited by a spark, set the aircraft ablaze. The plane became an inferno. Then, fire department and medical personnel took over.

"When we deal with mass casualties, we try to set up what we call a medical "triage", said Judy Moore, of the Forest Park Ambulance Service, who conducts mass casualty drills. "In a triage exercise, we gather the casualties together and then place them in one of three evacuation categories, depending upon the seriousness of their injuries.

"The first to go are those seriously injured that will probably live. Second, are those that probably won't live. Third, the "walking wounded" go, and the dead are the last to be removed."

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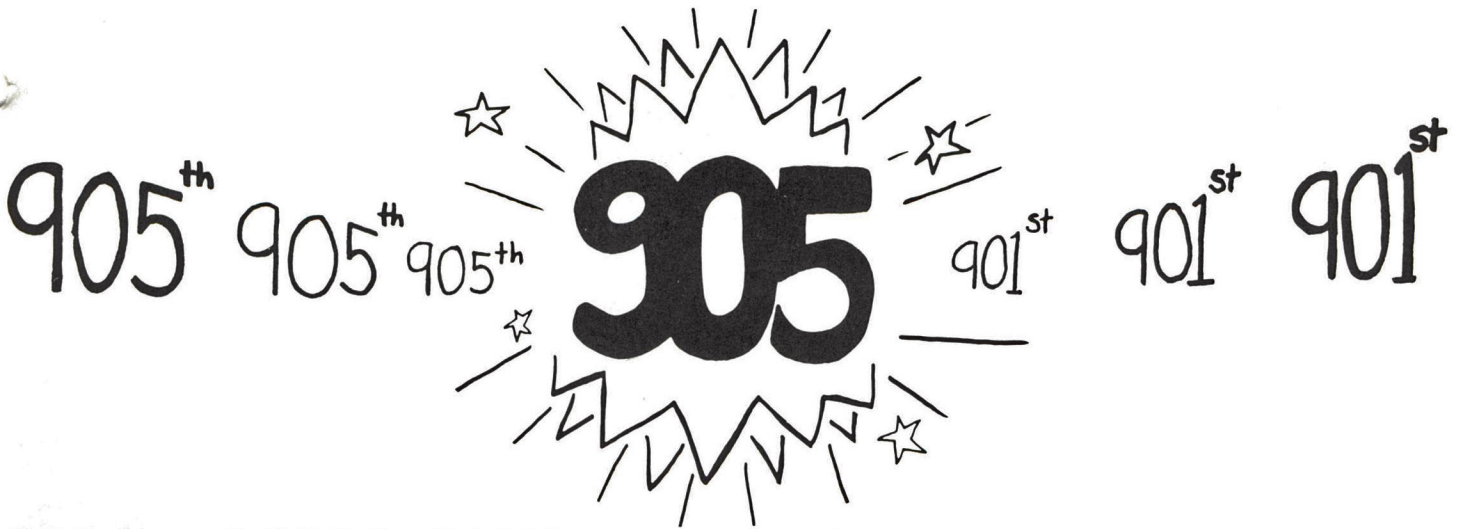
TSgt. John Wallace Spencer

SSgt. Gordon A. Newell

Sgt. Deborah Elliot

SrA. Mary L. Borelli





## 901st and 905th CAMS merge to form SUPER SQUADRON

As the 731st Tactical Airlift Squadron is phased out and many of its members become pilots in the 337th, the unit's maintenance people are also in a transition period. Many members of the 901st CAMS, who maintained the C-123s, will now join the 905th CAMS to become what many people call a "super squadron".

### About 400 strong

"Our new squadron will be made up approximately 400 people," said Col. Reginald A. Wackford, 905th CAMS, deputy commander for maintenance. When the last C-123 leaves in October, the 901st CAMS will leave, so to speak, with it.

"Ninety-nine point nine per cent of the members of the 901st CAMS will have positions in the 905th," Colonel Wackford said.

There are many different and varied areas in the maintenance field ranging from radio repair, environmental systems and avionics to administrative work and quality control. "Most of the people won't need any cross-training

because they'll be doing the same job they've done in the past," he said. "But, others will."

The C-130E has a different avionics and environmental system that the C-123. Maintenance people that work on the flight line will have to be cross-trained. Also, maintenance inspection personnel will have to become familiar with the C-130 so they'll know what to look for.

### Instructors brought here

"A total of nine instructors out of Air Training Command have come to Westover to cross-train selected maintenance personnel on the various C-130E systems," said SSgt. Bernard J. Beer, an avionics communications systems instructor from Little Rock AFB, Ark. The Familiarization Training Detachment arrived early this year and will continue to conduct classes throughout the summer.

The different classes range from 12 to 146 hours and take from three days to three months to complete. Sergeant Beers, who has taught four classes in

avionics here, usually teaches active duty personnel.

### Nice change

"This was a nice change," he said. "I'm extremely impressed with what I've seen of the Reserve program. There's an extreme wealth of knowledge here," he said. "Many of the guys I've taught have civilian jobs with the FAA and major electronic corporations and are highly qualified people."

The 901st seems to have a favorable impression of the FTD also. "The schools have been very helpful," said SMSgt. Paul N. Dube, 901st CAMS, avionics supervisor. "We've had a very productive couple of months so far."

"Also," he continued, "we've saved a lot of money by bringing these nine instructors in rather than shipping our 30 to 35 guys out."

MSgt. James Rothwell, 905th CAMS, first sergeant, feels the consolidation of the two squadrons will work out well too. "It will be a good thing," he said. "We'll be one "super squadron", working together."

## Westover firefighters share time and love to bring joy to your patients

Westover firefighters recently joined their colleagues from throughout Western Massachusetts in brightening the summer of seriously ill children who are hospitalized at the Shriners' Hospital in Springfield.

Led by Chief Haskel Jenkins, Reserve and civilian members of the base fire department participated in the annual Shriners' Hospital Picnic and Show which was held July 10 on the hospital grounds. It was the fifth straight year that a Westover contingent participated.

Organized by Springfield-area firefighters, the event featured food, entertainment and a parade of fire equipment. The firemen served as "buddies" for the young patients during the day-long event, explaining their apparatus and participating in the festivities.

"It was a tremendous day, and I think that everyone who participated felt very good about it," Chief Jenkins said. "I am delighted that we were invited to participate."

## Revised UTA Dates 1982

Sept. 11-12

Oct. 2-3

Oct. 30-31

Dec. 4-5



## Sprechen ze Deutch?

# Civil engineers share their skills in Germany

by SrA. Sandra M. Michon

One hundred and twenty-seven members of Westover's 905th CES provided construction and fire fighter support to the 86th CES at Ramstein Air Base, Germany between June 11 — June 27. Lt. Col. Robert D. Cosgrove, 905th CES squadron commander, explained the advantages of accomplishing the annual tour overseas.

"The annual tour permits us to practice mobility by relocating away from our home station, and we can provide needed construction support to Air Force bases around the world. The opportunity to visit foreign bases is a strong motivational factor for recruitment and retention in the Air Force Reserve.

"Most people do not realize the expertise of the Reserve. Many of our civil engineers have worked 20 or 30 years

in businesses of their own. They are generally older and more experienced than their active duty counterparts, and provide skills active duty personnel haven't acquired."

The reaction to overseas annual tours is varied, but generally positive. SMSgt James A. Cantore, structural superintendent said, "I love it. After pulling 17 years at Westover, who wouldn't love going to Germany? I feel we offer a valuable service."

"There's the advantage of seeing places and learning skills at the same time," explained SSgt. Josephine Mitchell, real property technician. She laughed as she added, "Besides, it's a challenge being with all these guys."

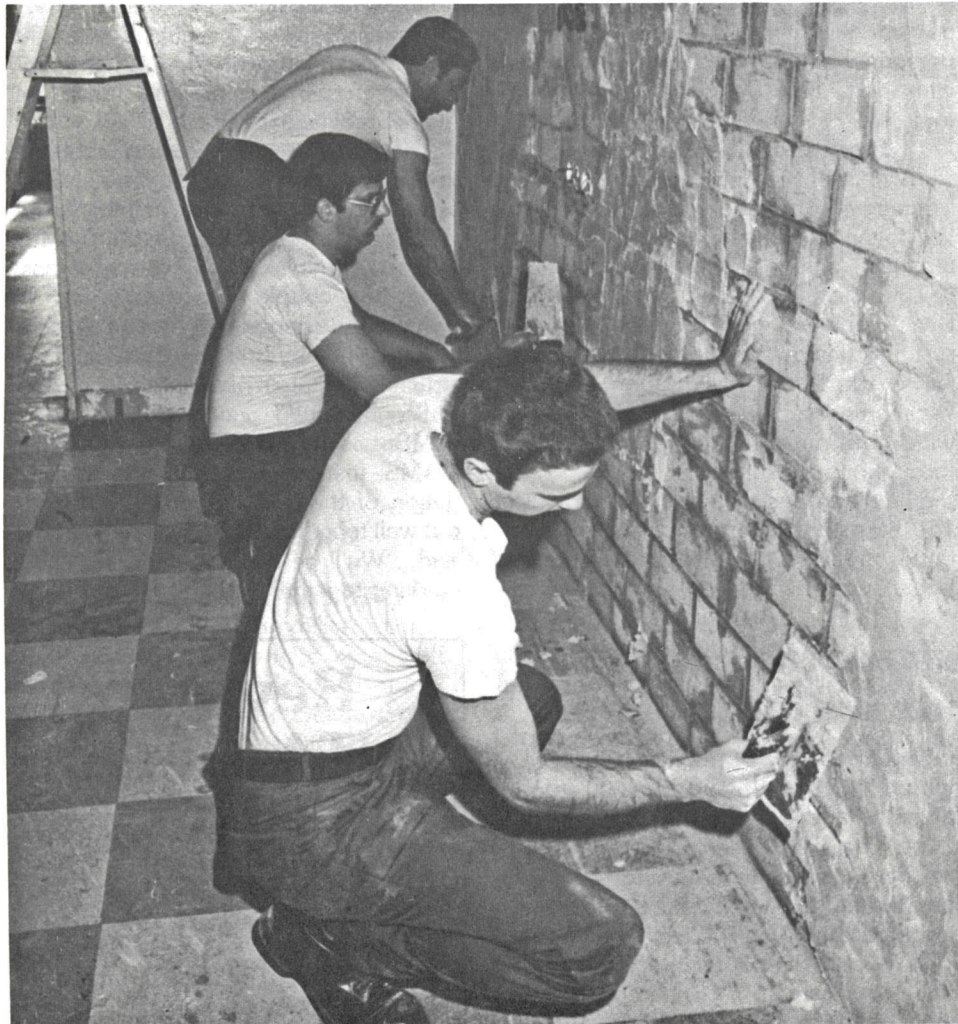
SrA Mitchell Staszko, interior electrician, said "It's great to be on a foreign base to experience things firsthand. It is



**Reservists board the bus on their way to Germany (USAF photo by SrA. Sandi Michon)**

interesting to be on a NATO alliance base and to be able to learn more of the lifestyle of the German people."

"The annual tour is an important aspect of a Reservist's training," said Colonel Cosgrove. "It gives us 15 days out of each year to function as a team and perform as active duty personnel."



**Three members of the 905th CES CF-3 team, TSgt. Randy Malek, SrA. Joseph Cullen and SSgt. Henry Stebbins, mortar a newly built concrete block wall in a Ramstein chapel.**



## Final Salute

Condolences are extended to the family of Lt. Col. Marvin F. Proctor, who died on June 28 at Travis AFB, California.

Colonel Proctor, operations officer with the 65th AES at Travis, had served as operations officer and senior medical air reserve technician with the 74th AES at Westover until 1979.

Prior to serving at Westover, he was assigned to the 67th AEF at Hanscom AFB.

\*\*\*\*\*

Condolences are also extended to the family of Mary E. Jankowski of Somers, Conn., who died July 1.

Mrs. Jankowski's husband, Victor is employed in vehicle maintenance at Westover.



# ROA Selects 439th CSG as outstanding unit

The 439th CSG has been selected by the Reserve Officers Association for a national honor.

The ROA recently picked the unit to receive its annual award for the outstanding Air Force Reserve non-flying unit.

The ROA, which is headquartered in Washington, D.C., is a national organization comprised of reserve officers from all branches of the U.S. Armed Forces. Its objectives are to support the nation's military policies and to promote the interests of reserve officers.

## Westover's outstanding success of Condor Redoubt

Documentation of Westover's accomplishments, on a day-to-day basis, as well as Westover's participation in Condor Redoubt proved sufficient evidence of award winning performance.

Col. Roy E. Ayers, Jr., commander of the 439th CSG, recently represented the unit at the ROA annual convention in Puerto Rico, where the award was presented.



Col. Roy E. Ayers, Jr. shows Brig. Gen. Donald E. Haugen the ROA Award presented to the 439th CSG at the ROA annual convention in Puerto Rico. (USAF photo by Maj. Robert Carroll)

## PROMOTIONS

Maj. Charles A. Brown, Jr.  
Maj. Edwin A. Doty, Jr.  
Capt. Kent E. Berwick  
Capt. James R. Hosey, Jr.  
Capt. Michael J. Rosen  
TSgt. Patricia A. Byrnes  
TSgt. Ricardo T. Degrace  
TSgt. John J. Duffy  
TSgt. Maureen G. Haddock  
TSgt. David A. McKemmie  
TSgt. Donald A. Morin  
TSgt. Gregory S. Nolder  
TSgt. Robert A. Parrott  
TSgt. Stephen G. Pothier  
TSgt. Aidan Prendergast  
TSgt. Lewis G. Sprague  
TSgt. Paula M. Tinnemeyer  
TSgt. Bradley S. Tryba  
SSgt. John F. Barrett  
SSgt. Harold B. Crapo, III  
SSgt. Philip S. Delany, II  
SSgt. Paul F. Downing  
SSgt. Brian A. Gaudet  
SSgt. Edwin A. Holtz  
SSgt. Christopher Keyes  
SSgt. Donald J. Morse  
SSgt. Michael F. Riley  
SSgt. Robert J. Rudd  
SSgt. Walter F. Southard  
SSgt. David E. Wroblewski  
SrA. Mayleen Adams  
SrA. Gareth W. Balch  
SrA. Morrison L. Banner  
SrA. Mark D. Bernier  
SrA. Howard M. Blackwood  
SrA. Mark W. Boucher



## Promotions Enlistments & Re-enlistments Congratulations

SrA. Richard D. Bready  
SrA. Ronald D. Brevard  
SrA. Wayne E. Britto  
SrA. David K. Carter  
SrA. Paul E. Cote  
SrA. Diane M. Crosby  
SrA. Myrna Cruz  
SrA. Guy F. Delia  
SrA. Denise C. Diffley  
SrA. Maureen C. Francis  
SrA. Malcolm J. Frazer  
SrA. Eve R. Heller  
SrA. Brenda A. Hogan  
SrA. Alan E. Jarry  
SrA. Brian A. Jones  
SrA. Samuel Van Leuven  
SrA. Philip J. Lupien  
SrA. Frank A. Manegio, Jr.  
SrA. Donald J. Morse  
SrA. Robert R. Motley  
SrA. Virginia Pelletier  
SrA. Constance M. Ruel  
SrA. Dale P. Sanborn  
SrA. Daniel G. Sklut  
SrA. Stephen J. Smith

SrA. Terry P. Smith  
SrA. Jeffrey W. Urbank  
SrA. Robert J. Vujs  
A1C Linda L. Bronder  
A1C Laurie A. Bulter  
A1C Audrey M. Dean  
A1C Steven W. Gurau  
A1C Lana L. Lue  
A1C Charles J. Marrone  
A1C David R. Rannikko  
A1C John J. Simpson  
A1C Peter Skoglund

## ENLISTED

TSgt. Robert W. O'Connor  
SSgt. Robert A. Bathgate  
SSgt. David H. Gile  
SSgt. Gregory S. Symonds  
Sgt. Thomas F. Lumb  
Sgt. Michael J. May  
Sgt. Julius B. Mundt  
Sgt. Joseph J. Pandolfi  
Sgt. Quentin A. Richter  
Sgt. John W. Rowe  
A1C Eugene E. Fish

A1C Sylvia J. Gallagher  
AB Rene L. Nacca  
AB Donna K. Pearcy

## REENLISTED

SMSgt. James E. Devitt  
MSgt. Barbara A. Bender  
MSgt. Maurice S. Jiggett  
TSgt. Paul H. Crespo  
TSgt. Michael Cyr  
TSgt. John J. Leclair  
TSgt. Charles A. Lexius  
TSgt. Anthony F. Machrone  
TSgt. Francis P. McElwee  
TSgt. Gary W. Pike  
TSgt. Leonard B. Scammons  
TSgt. John E. Sheehan  
TSgt. Bruce W. Szepelak  
TSgt. Steven M. Warner  
TSgt. Lawrence A. Weir  
SSgt. Jack A. Canfijn  
SSgt. William X. Forget  
SSgt. Paul C. Gillis  
SSgt. Edwin A. Holtz  
SSgt. Ralph M. Jones, Jr.  
SSgt. Gary A. Lawrence  
SSgt. Robert A. Lussier  
SSgt. William O. McGhee  
SSgt. Michael W. O'Hearne  
SSgt. Patricia A. Petersen  
SSgt. George H. Porter  
SSgt. Paul A. Sabol  
SSgt. Mona St. Pierre  
SSgt. Allen R. Tomlinson  
SSgt. Ronald R. Turmelle  
Sgt. Dominick A. Galizia  
Sgt. Larry A. Pray



## 439th Transportation personnel Receive 14th AF performance awards

by TSgt. John Wallace Spencer

Outstanding Performance awards have been presented by 14th Air Force to MSgt. Eugene C. Smith, 901st MAPF and also to the Vehicle Operations Branch of the 439th Combat Support Group.

Sergeant Smith was recognized as the outstanding 14th Air Force transportation noncommissioned officer of the year.

Westover's Vehicle Operations

Branch received the 14th Air Force Base Air Force Motor Vehicle Operations Unit of the Year.

Dale Altman, vehicle operations supervisor said, "This is the second year in a row that our unit has received this honor. We're all looking forward to the next plateau.

Winning of the 14th AF awards places both Sergeant Smith and the Vehicle Operation Branch in the upcoming AFRES competition.

## Westover Social Actions office gains drug and alcohol abuse NCO

SSgt. Cathi Litrenta has joined the wing's Social Action Office as the Drug and Alcohol Control Abuse NCO.

After completing the Equal Opportunity Management School at Patrick AFB in July, she will teach classes at the newcomer's briefings and at units throughout Westover.

"Air Force Reservists soon will be introduced to the newest phase of Social Actions classes — sexual harrasment," explains Sergeant Litrenta. "It's a potential problem which exists not only in the military but in the civilian sector as well. Sexual Harrasment not only exists against women but against men,

too. For example, a male secretary often faces colleagues' negative or skeptical attitudes because of the stigma associated with a previous 'woman's job'. Through education, we hope to eliminate these harmful practices and beliefs," she concludes.

Sergeant Litrenta was on active duty for eight years. She is a graduate of the Social Actions School at Lackland AFB and worked in social actions offices and with Indians near Ellsworth AFB, S.D.

Presently, she is an executive secretary for the Springfield (Mass.) Photo Mount Company.



Brig. Gen. Donald E. Haugen, commander of the 439th TAW, presents a certificate of outstanding performance from 14th Air Force to Barbara G. Reed. Mrs. Reed, a civilian employee at Westover for 28 years, was cited for "exemplary service" as officer effectiveness report monitor with the 439th CSG. (USAF photo by SSgt. Donald Talbot)

## BRIEFS

### Coming soon . . . an MEI

Polish the brass, spit shine the shoes and catch up on all that paperwork — an MEI is just around the corner.

The 439th TAW will be the subject of a Management Effectiveness Inspection at Westover during the period of August 4-10. It will be conducted by representatives of the AFRES Inspector General's office.

### New Wing recruiters

The 439th TAW gained two new recruiters recently when TSgts. Albert Breton and William Butler graduated from the Air Force Reserve Recruiter School at Lackland AFB.

Sergeant Breton, formerly NCOIC with the 439th CSG/DW, will be stationed at Westover. He will cover parts of Western Massachusetts and Connecticut, as well as Vermont and New York state.

Sergeant Butler, who previously served with the 74th AES, will be stationed with the 911th TAG in Pittsburgh.

### Chaplains relocate

Chaplain (Capt.) Frances Passamonte will leave the 439th in August for active duty with the regular Air Force. He reports to Sheppard AFB, Texas on August 16, where he will serve as a Protestant chaplain.

The 439th will also lose Chaplain (1st Lt.) James Drucker in the near future when his religious duties take him to Pennsylvania and Northern New Jersey. Chaplain Drucker hopes to retain his Air Force affiliation by joining either an Air Force Reserve or Air National Guard unit near his new residence.

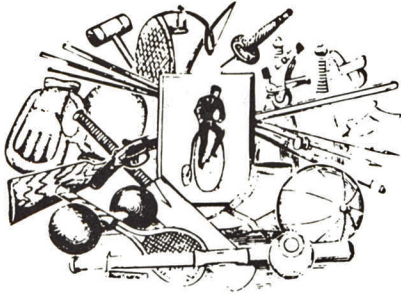
### Survival school graduate

2nd Lt. Jane Dooley, 439th TAW intelligence officer, recently graduated from the Air Force Survival School at Fairchild AFB, Washington.

During the rigorous, three-week course, Lieutenant Dooley learned wilderness survival techniques and was subjected to conditions similar to those experienced by prisoners of war.

"It really tested our limits," Lieutenant Dooley said. "It was one of the most interesting, and demanding experiences that I've had in the Air Force."





# SPORTS OF SORTS

## Wizards work magic on Marines to lead intramural softball league

What's in a name? Ask the Navy Wizards.

They have been conjuring a special type of magic on the softball diamond lately and lead the Westover intramural softball league with a perfect 6-0 record.

The Navy nine displayed their potent powers on July 1 when they wrestled first place from the Marines with a 13-1 win at Westover. The Leathernecks had previously won seven straight games.

Team standings in the league, as it nears mid-season, are: Wizards, 6-0; Marines, 7-1; MEPS, 4-2; Air/Maint., 3-3; Fire Dept. 3-3; Slugs, 3-2; Army Recruiters, 1-5; Det. 5, 0-4; and Civil Engineers, 0-6.

While the Navy tops the team standings, two members of the Marines lead in the hitting department. Ernie Airoidi and Gerry Williams have been whaling the cover off the ball for the Leathernecks with respective batting averages of .702 and .619.



### Women's Competition

In the Westover women's intramural softball league, the Dugouts, coached by Hazel Perry, dominate with a 6-0 mark. The She Devils are in second with a 3-3 record, followed by Navy with 2-4 and 439th CSG with 1-5.

The base women's softball team found the early going tough as they dropped the first two games in a Chicopee invitational tournament. The women lost to the two teams that advanced to the next step tournament as they lost to Chicopee's Universal Plastics, 6-5, and Belchertown's VFW, 4-0. The Westover women hope to make up for their rocky start during upcoming tournaments.



### Labor Day Swim Meet

McNicholas, head of base recreation services, has also announced that the annual Westover Labor Day Swim Meet will be held in September.

Details about the competition, which features prized for a large number of swimming and diving events, are available at the Westover gym.

### Murdock Leads Hitters

Catcher Jack Murdock has been slamming hits left and right for the Westover men's softball team. The sturdy Murdock, who also doubles as the 439th's senior enlisted adviser, has



been tormenting opposing pitchers with a .650 batting average.

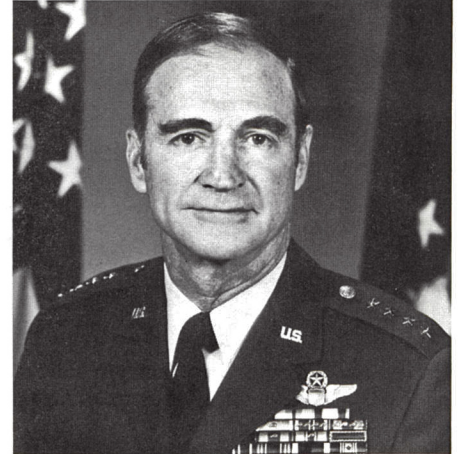
Despite Murdock's heroics at the plate, and solid fielding by shortstop Rick Oliver and third sacker Tom Owens, the Westover men, who compete in the Chicopee Industrial League, sport a 4-2 record.

"Right now we are hoping to make the playoffs," coach Mike McNicholas said. He indicated that his team might also represent the base in military competition and other civilian softball tournaments later this summer.

## Speedy recovery

Wishes for a speedy recovery are extended to retired Col. Roy McCord, wing executive officer, who is recovering at home following surgery; and to Lt. Col. Bud Gorman, 901st CAMS commander, also recovering from surgery at Cardinal Cushing Hospital, Brockton, Mass.

## General Gabriel named Air Force Chief of Staff



Gen. Charles A. Gabriel

Gen. Charles A. Gabriel has been nominated by President Ronald Reagan to serve as Chief of Staff of the Air Force.

Upon confirmation by the U.S. Senate, he will succeed Gen. Lew Allen, Jr., whose term expired June 30.

A veteran of 100 combat missions in Korea and 152 combat missions in Vietnam, General Gabriel previously served as commander in chief of the U.S. Air Forces in Europe.

## "Haugen's Heroes" . . .

(continued from page 1)

Other members of the winning crew included 2nd Lt. Michael Marten, co-pilot; Capt. T. J. Grenham, navigator; MSgt. Thomas Durkin, engineer and MSgt. Ralph Branyen and TSgt. John Missale, loadmasters.

The joint inspection competition tested the ability of the crews to inspect airdrop loads for defects and malfunctions. The 439th's inspectors, SMSgt. Charles Arvin and TSgt. Thomas Dzwonkus, scored 188 out of a possible 200 points to win that category.

Although it was the first time a Reserve crew captured two gold medals, Captain Ferro didn't find it unusual that Reservists did well at Volant Rodeo.

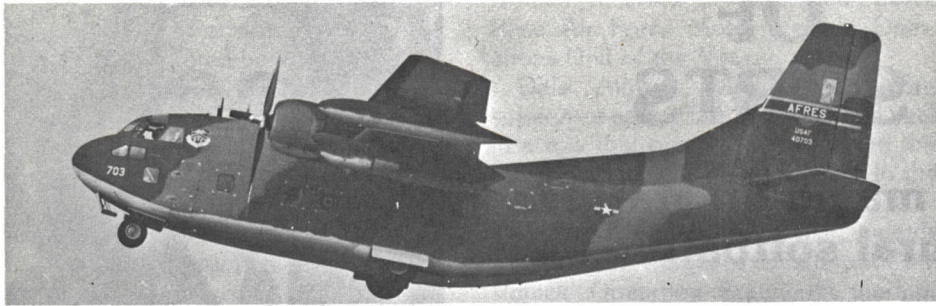
"Even though we don't do our jobs on a day-to-day basis like active duty crews do, our combined total experience gave us the edge," the captain said. "The wing has flown C-130s for more than 11 years now, and each member of our crew has flown more than 3,500 hours in the aircraft."

Colonel Motley said that the success at Volant Rodeo '82 would make his crew work even harder during the coming year. "It's a beginning, next time I'd like to win all eight," he said.



## 703's final Westover flight

# A tribute to one heck of an airplane



Up, up and away on her final Air Force Reserve mission, "703" takes off from Westover with Lt. Col. Ed Lincoln and Capt. Bob Martens, both of the 731st TAW, at the controls.

### by Capt. Rick Dyers

"In many ways, it was as much a sentimental journey as a military mission.

The C-123 bares tail number 703. She has been to Vietnam — places like Plei Ku, Da Nang, Ton Son Nut and hundreds that didn't rate a name but served as landing strips nonetheless.

When the shooting stopped, she found her way to Westover. Her sturdy, camouflaged frame was used to haul paratroopers, trucks, engine parts, Civil Air Patrol Cadets and just about anything else that the Air Force Reserve had to get from Point A to Point B.

This flight was a training mission over the Pioneer Valley and the pilots, Lt. Col. Ed Lincoln and Capt. Bob Martens, had flown the route countless times before.

There would be none of the drama of an aeromedical evacuation, none of the heart-pounding excitement of a tactical assault landing in Vietnam.

### a special flight

Still, it was special. Everyone on board, from the crew in the cockpit to the slightly queasy Public Affairs officer in the back, knew it.

It was 703's last flight at Westover.

The thundering din of the engines made conversation difficult, at best, but it also created a noisy type of solitude. As the C-123 cast her shadow over the lush summer foliage below, one couldn't help but reflect upon where this aircraft had been, and where she would soon be going.

The C-123s at Westover are going the way of the nickel beer, the dime phone call and the 25-cent Sunday paper. The reciprocating engine, which generated the sturdy heartbeat of thousands of flying hours, has been surpassed by changing times, and by changing technology. The 439th's conversion to an all C-130 inventory sends some of the "Providers" to foreign

countries, and others to mothballs.

It was apparent that 703 still has plenty of life left in her. The take off had been smooth and steep, and the plane cruised at speeds in excess of 140 knots.

Captain Martens had flown C-130s on active duty, and later switched to C-123s in the Reserve. He's flown more than 2,000 hours in the aircraft. His father worked for many years at Pratt & Whitney Aircraft in Connecticut, where the "Providers" reciprocating engines had been manufactured.

### pride in accomplishments

So when he spoke about his "favorite aircraft", his words bore the traces of both affection and authority.

He used words like "sturdy", "durable", and "dependable". He delighted in tales of short, unimproved runways, rescue missions and tonnage flown. There was no remorse about the passing, but there was considerable pride in the accomplishments.

"She's been one heck of an airplane, the best," he said.

The flight was uneventful and the landing was flawless. With 703 back on the ground and the crew occupied with post-flight checks, the PA officer paid his final respects.

Were there, he thought, lessons about life that could be learned from a

28-year old C-123?

The notion seemed ridiculous at first. Aircraft are thought of in terms of plastic models, but never as role models. Still, there was something about 703 that was admirable, and worthy of emulation.

### stubby, but dependable

Her tasks were never that glamorous, but she performed those nitty-gritty chores dependably. She wasn't elegant (stubby would have been more accurate), but she flew well. She wasn't the fastest plane in the Air Force inventory, but, like the fabled tortoise in the race against the hare, she always completed the course.

Perhaps there were lessons to be learned from 703. But in any event, Martens had been right.

She was one heck of an airplane.



## 731st to stage farewell reunion during Aug. UTA

The 731st TAS, soon to be deactivated at Westover, will stage a reunion on the base Aug. 7.

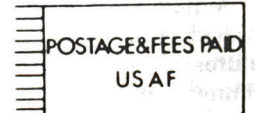
The festivities will include a C-123 fly-over, a memorial service for deceased members of the squadron, presentation of awards, and a social hour.

The 731st will also make a presentation to the base, commemorating the unit's association with Westover.

All past and present members of the 731st are invited to attend the function, which will begin at 2 p.m. in the Base Hangar.

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