

PATRIOT

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2012
in review



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UTA SNAPSHOT

>> Happy New Year! There will be a Commander's Call during the A UTA on Sat., Jan. 5, at 2:30 p.m. in the Base Hangar.

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ON THE COVER: Westover was busy with activity in 2012, from homecomings to the Great New England Air Show to Hurricane Sandy relief flights. 2012 turned into another banner year for the largest Air Reserve Base in the country. Story and more photos on page 6.



CHILLIN' IN THE FOG >> On Monday, Dec. 10 the fog hung heavy over the flightline in place of the usual snow drifts. (photo by SrA. Kelly Galloway)

As we begin 2013, I'd like to thank the members of the Patriot Wing for another year of excellence. Your outstanding performance was recognized by Air Force Reserve Command multiple times during the past year.

Westover units earned four best-in-AFRC unit awards in 2012: Fire Department of the Year, Outstanding Aero-medical Staging Squadron; Outstanding Civil Engineer Unit, and Outstanding Communications Squadron. In addition, we had so many individual best-in-command awards there's not enough room for me to list them here.

As the crown jewel, Westover was selected by AFRC as the nominee for the 2013 Commander-in-Chief Annual Award for Installation Excellence. As Maj. Gen. Craig Gourley, AFRC Vice Commander, stated: "The outstanding performance of WARB as a premier installation has immeasurably contributed to the mission of Air Force Reserve Command and the nomination is well deserved. Congratulations to the fine airmen of Westover Air Reserve Base on a job well done!"

Clearly, you excel at accomplishing the mission, but there is more to the excellence of this wing than awards and mission success. You began 2012 by hosting the Kids of Courage in January and you finished 2012 by offering aid and comfort to our neighbors in New

York and New Jersey following Hurricane Sandy. Through these and countless other acts of generosity, you have shown your true colors. Whether it was performing the first-ever deployment of a C-5

Expeditionary Airlift Squadron to Diego Garcia or hosting World War II veterans at the 2012 Great New England Airshow, you have done the job with dedication, professionalism and compassion.

Our units continue to support the community through volunteer efforts such as the 337th AS serving holiday meals to more than 500 senior citizens in Chicopee. It is important to be mission-oriented, but to be mission-oriented and also have the compassion to use your valuable free time to help others in need is the hallmark of a truly remarkable group of people.



"The continuous training and planning that makes us recognized as leaders in AFRC paid off."

I'm confident that the Patriot Wing will begin 2013 prepared to conquer whatever challenges are thrown our way. We will strive to be prepared for expected challenges, but

we will also be prepared for unexpected challenges. We will face the challenges of 2013 as a team and I'm certain that we will continue to prove that we are the best wing in AFRC. Thank you for your service to our country, and thank you for all that you do every day to assist others. You are truly Leaders in Excellence!

by Col. Steven Vautrain
439th Airlift Wing Commander

BRIEFS |

Wing Annual Awards

The winners of the 439th AW annual awards are:

Airman - SrA. Scott M. Gallant, 439th SFS

NCO - TSgt. Ryan N. Connolly, 337th AS

SNCO - MSgt. Anthony C. Giardini, 439th SFS

CGO - Capt. Bruce J. Lawler, 439th SFS

Civilian - Ms. Melanie S. Thorpe, 439th CS

Civilian Supervisor - Mr. Wayne M. Williams, 439th MSG

1st Sergeant - MSgt Eric D. Harris, 439th AES.

News from Around the Wing

The Lounge at Building 5550 has officially opened and will be serving drinks and a small menu from 5 p.m. to midnight and will be open UTA weekends. See their Facebook page at Westover ARB Consolidated Club.

The military equal opportunity office has a vacancy for a motivated SSgt. or TSgt. Those interested in applying should contact Maj. Burch at 557-2220 or via email. The Flyers Inn lodging office has moved back into the newly-renovated Building 2201.

Elms College offers classes on base. Our Lady of the Elms College, in conjunction with the base education office, is now offering classes on base and online for the spring 2013 semester. Those interested in taking classes to complete their CCAF degree should contact SSgt. Cooper at 557-3439.

AFRC Awards

Congratulations to the command's 2012 Security Forces annual award winners: Capt. Bruce Lawler and MSgt. Anthony Giardini.

Westover's former wing commander dies

Maj. Gen. James Czekanski (ret.), the 439th Airlift Wing's 8th commander, died Dec. 14. Gen. Czekanski led the Patriot Wing from March 1992 to May 1997. He also commanded a rescue and recovery squadron, a tactical airlift group, another airlift wing, and the 4th Air Force.

He and his wife Susan resided in Shalimar, Fla., since his retirement in 2003.

On the Front Line

by SrA. Kelly Galloway

Hobert Yeager was 18 and working on a gas field in rural West Virginia when he received a draft notice in the mail in 1943. "I didn't think much about it at the time, I guess. A close buddy of mine was also drafted the same day," Yeager said. The two left for boot camp together but after training they were separated. His buddy fought in Germany while Yeager was sent to the South Pacific.

"My buddy didn't make it home," Yeager, now 88 years old, recalled.

Nearly 70 years later, he was able to take his first trip to Washington, D.C., courtesy of the Honor Flight Network, to see the memorial that honors the 16 million who served in the armed forces of the U.S. during World War II, the more than 400,000 who died, and the millions who supported the war effort from home.

As light infantry and mortar gunner, Yeager was assigned to the 21st Infantry Regiment, under the 24th Infantry Division, one of the first U.S. Army Divisions to see combat in World War II. "There were three or four regiments on board to New Guinea," Yeager said. After the troops made landfall, they set up tents and camped at the bottom of the mountain for a few months while waiting for assignment.

"We could see General MacArthur's headquarters, 'Ol' Stovepipe' as we called him, from where we were camping," Yeager said.

In late 1944, the 24th division made an assault landing at Leyte Island in the Philippines, initially encountering only light resistance. However, once the 24th drove further into the Leyte Valley, they came under heavy enemy fire, facing snipers and mortar fire.

"There was constant attack for a good while," Yeager recalled. "While at Pinamopoan Ridge, my buddy was killed right next to me by an exploding mortar – The Lieutenant to my left had his jaw blown off," Yeager said without emotion. With the entire regiment under constant fire and explosions all around, Yeager says he was lucky to only have had shrapnel driven into his sides. After the fire subsided, Yeager was rushed to the 36th Evacuation Hospital for treatment. While there, he developed malaria. "I don't remember much after

that because my fever was so high," Yeager recalled. After 20 days, he was released and rejoined his regiment who were still fighting on the front lines in Leyte.

After taking Leyte Island, Yeager's regiment was sent to aid occupied Japan.

"We thought we were to go to Australia to pick up more troops, but were diverted and sent to Okayama, Japan," he said. "We passed through bombed-out Hiroshima on the troop train – I could see debris and rubble."

After 31 days in occupied Japan, Yeager returned home to West Virginia and received an honorable discharge in 1946. For his service



World War II veteran Hobert Yeager rests at the WW II memorial during an Honor Flight trip to Washington, D.C., Nov. 10, 2012. Yeager was drafted in 1943 and served in the Pacific Theater where he fought battles on Leyte Island with the 21st Infantry Regiment which counted 2,133 enemy kills and 14 captured prisoners (42% of the division total). He received two purple hearts from wounds incurred during the battles and was sent to help occupied Japan in late 1945. (photo by SrA. Kelly Galloway)

Sgt. Hobert Yeager, returned from war in January 1946.

and sacrifices, he was presented with two Purple Heart Medals, a Bronze Star, an Army Good Conduct medal, Victory Medal, Occupation medal and an Asiatic Pacific Campaign medal.

"After the war, I received a letter from the 24th division commander which stated: 'during the entire period, this regiment was attacked, fighting in terrain which favored the enemy more than us. The 21st Infantry Regiment counted 2,133 enemy kills... 14 captured prisoners. The total for the 24th Division was 5,149 enemy casualties. This regiment therefore accounted for 42 percent of the division total.'"

When asked what he thought of seeing the monuments in D.C., he replied: "It was good to finally be able see what had been built in our honor." On the bus back to the hotel, the chairman of the Honor Flight Network, Jim McLaughlin, addressed the 15 veterans on board: "Although none of you will ever accept the title -- in my eyes you are all heroes."

WWII Vet recalls deadly encounter

"While in our fox holes at night, we were trained to sleep with our .45 – loaded, with a round in the chamber, on our chest, with a finger on the trigger," explained Hobart Yeager. "On one particular night, I was resting when I heard a twig snap – without hesitation I pointed my weapon towards the opening of the fox-hole and fired. I had just shot one of the enemy who was trying to sneak up on the foxhole and kill me with his bayonet." -- Hobert Yeager

Excerpt from WW II commendation letter

On the 19th of June 1945, the 21st Infantry was withdrawn from combat and moved to a reserve area. The 18th June 1945 marked the sixty-third day of continuous combat against a stubborn and well-trained enemy.

During practically the entire period this regiment was attacked. Fighting in terrain which favored the enemy in defense and in hemp and cogan grass where the heat day was radiated to an unbearable degree, you never once failed to take an assigned objective. -- Hobert Yeager

If you know a vet

Honor Flight Network is a non-profit organization created solely to honor America's veterans for their sacrifices. Top priority is given to the senior veterans – WW II Veterans, Korean War Veterans, along with other veterans who may be terminally ill. If you would like to sign a veteran up for an all-expense paid trip to Washington, D.C., where they will be shown the memorials, please visit www.honorflight.org -- fill out a "Veteran Application" and submit it to the address provided.

Pilot retention program expands eligibility

Robins Air Force Base, Ga. -- A new proposed Aviator Retention Pay program for Air Force Reserve aircrew is expected to begin in 2013.

The ARP plan focuses on retaining aircrew officers to meet basic mission requirements for the reserve.

The offer will target only locations where significant shortfalls in rated officer manning exist and will offer a \$30,000 bonus over a three-year span.

Pilots and combat systems officers who have completed their initial training commitment including those eligible for retirement but excluding those in

the 16 to 20 years of service will be offered a bonus. Additionally, any pilot or CSO willing to join a critically manned unit between completion of initial training commitment and 25 years of aviation service will be offered a bonus.

"The Air Force Reserve Command aircrew force is shrinking, particularly in pilots and combat systems operators. This is due to a number of factors, including the shrinking size of the regular Air Force. In this environment, every crew member we can retain in the total force is absolutely vital," said Lt. Gen. James Jackson, AFRC commander.

Lt. Col. John Welch, Rated/Operations Force Policy chief, Air Force Reserve Personnel Directorate, said the new program is open to more people. The old Aviator Continuation Pay program was only offered to eligible aviators in full-time Active Guard Reserve status. The old program also sets limits on years of aviation service and total federal active military service. It was not tailored to meet the needs of a specific type of weapons system or unit.

If approved by January, the program will begin in early 2013.

Base construction upgrades: \$25 million

By SSgt. George Cloutier

In 2012, Westover received \$24.6 million for projects around base, with more than 20 projects in various stages of completion. Here's a snapshot of several high-visibility base projects. The information comes from Mr. Brett Bailey, Base Civil Engineering.

Mobile Tail Enclosure

The MTE is a moveable structure on rails that will protect maintenance workers from harsh weather conditions during the winter months. Once completed, it will be the largest structure of its kind in the Air Force. The cost will be approximately \$5 million. Construction will conclude in late January.

Base Consolidated Club

The interior and exterior of the Club is currently being renovated to improve the appearance of the facility, upgrade mechanical systems and address force-protection measures. The cost will be approximately \$5.2 million and will conclude in autumn 2013. Club operations have been relocated to Building 5550 for the duration of this project.

Running Track

Though some work on the ellipse road has

already begun, further funding has been awarded to resurface the track and repave the road. The project will cost approximately \$680,000. Construction will begin in the spring and will be finished by spring 2013.

Bowling Alley

The interior and exterior of the bowling alley is currently being renovated. Renovations will include installation of fire sprinklers, improvements to the bathrooms and entryways, and upgrades to the kitchen and customer service areas. The project will cost approximately \$2 million with completion in February 2013.

Visiting Officers Quarters/Visiting Airmen Quarters

The VOQs are undergoing force-protection upgrades, which include upgrades to the parking lots and windows. Work is also being done to upgrade the heating and air conditioning in both facilities. Renovations will cost approximately \$4.8 million with completion scheduled for late winter. In addition, design work has been funded for future remodeling of the VAQs, which will replace the remaining gang latrines and bring all lodging rooms up to current standards.

Runway Repair

A \$7.6 million repair of the 7,000-foot crosswind runway (runway 15-33) was completed in November.

2012: A year in review

By TSgt. Timm Huffman

During 2012, Westover Airmen racked up 198 flying missions, moved 3.1 million pounds of cargo and put 19 planes through the isochronal inspection process.

In addition to the regular workload, the wing took on a number of other roles in 2012.

January began a string of Gillette Stadium flyovers, when 337th Airlift Squadron crew zoomed above the American Football Conference playoff game between the New England Patriots and the Baltimore Ravens. Aircrews performed two similar missions in the fall, once for the University of Massachusetts home opener in September and again for the Patriots in November.

In August, nearly 210,000 civilians attended Westover's open house to see performances and displays of military and stunt aircraft and even a jet-powered port-a-potty.



The theme of the air show, "A Salute to the Greatest Generation," honored veterans of World War II, including the 160 in attendance.

In October, when "Superstorm Sandy" slammed the East Coast, crews from the 439th flew a 14-hour sortie to deliver electrical workers and utility trucks from California to the disaster area in New York.

As the New England Federal Emergency Management Agency Incident Support Site, Westover also played host to 74 tractor trailers full of emergency supplies for victims of the massive storm.

Last year held grim news for the base in the form of the proposed budget cuts. The president's current budget proposal has

Westover losing eight C-5s by 2016.

While 2012 was a successful and fast-paced year, Westover can't let its guard down, said Col. Steven Vautrain, commander of the 439th Airlift Wing. In the face of ever-changing U.S. policy, tension in the Middle East and the ongoing potential for natural disasters, 2013 will be busy for the 439th.

Haiti After the Earthquake

By Lt. Col. James Bishop

Nearly three years after Haiti's lethal earthquake, and the 439th Airlift Wing's humanitarian response, I visited the recovering country.

On January 12, 2010, a magnitude 7.0 earthquake struck Haiti, killing more than 300,000 and leaving about one million homeless. Within three days, the 439th Airlift Wing flew emergency supplies to Homestead Air Reserve Base, Fla., to transport to Port-au-Prince as part of Operation Unified Response.

I traveled with my nephew, Dr. Ben Fredrick, President of Thriving Villages International and head of the Global Health Center at Penn State Hershey. For 12-14 hours each day, Ben met with politicians, health workers, nuns, priests, Kazaks (a sort of justice of the peace), teachers, patients, and others to provide access to clean water, basic health care, nutrition and education in the remote coastal area of Pestel -- some of the most impoverished villages in the western hemisphere.

As the time drew near, a sense of dread crept over me. Anything I read about Haiti said the small republic held layers of danger for visitors. Since the 2010 earthquake, the U.S. State Department has maintained a travel warning for cholera and urges people not to travel to Haiti for "non-essential" trips. If there was no revolt going on, as in 2004, or natural disaster, there were kidnappings, lack of medical care, even nasty intestinal infections from a sip of local water. But the cholera epidemic, which broke out after the earthquake and has killed 7,500 so far, scared me most.

We arrived Oct. 6 in Port-au-Prince. The city is a sensory assault. Car horns blare, goats bleat and roosters crow. Porters grabbed our bags, then asked for more than the five dollars apiece we gave them. Outside the airport's gated walls, the markets are strewn with garbage. I saw one tall, well-dressed man carrying a dead chicken by the feet. Police and ambulances are rare. The well-dressed beauty of the Haitian people stands in stark contrast to the dusty shoes and fly-covered meat for sale in the market. Haiti seems a contradiction of beauty and ugliness.

That night we were preparing for the long trip to our main destination: the remote area of Pestel on the southwest side of the island. Evens, the Haitian translator, Eliab, the driver, "Dokté Ben" and I



(Top) A boy and girl commute to school in Pestel, Haiti. Nearly three years after the lethal earthquake – and the worldwide relief effort, which the 439th Airlift Wing joined – Haiti shows signs of recovery. (Middle) Dr. Ben Fredrick, president of Thriving Villages International, examines a patient in rural Haiti during a humanitarian visit. (Bottom) In the marketplace in Pestel, Haiti, a young boy watches the activity. (photos by Lt. Col. James Bishop)



pulled into a "National" gas station to exchange dollars for gourdes, the Haitian currency, and to fill up for the trip. A man wearing navy blue pants tucked into combat boots stood by the door holding a shotgun.

We pumped \$100 worth of gas into our red Toyota 4-Runner. Afterwards, I heard an animated discussion in Creole between our driver and the attendant. Then we drove off without paying. The man clutching the shotgun watched us go. I

asked Evens what we were doing.

"We're going to exchange the dollars at another station where the rate is better and then return to pay him."

"He trusts us to come back?" I asked.

"He knows we will."

If we did not come back, he would lose a month's salary,"

Evens said. Basically, we wouldn't do that to a brother, he said. That was the first of many lessons: in Haiti, other people matter. A lot. In the midst of the smell and rubble that still isn't fully cleared away, we saw the hope of something solid in Haiti.

The next morning, Sunday, we left at 5:30. We passed people in the pre-dawn, women walking in crisp white dresses and men in bright shirts and ties, and busloads of people dressed for church. We heard loud singing from one the many churches we passed, and for the next seven hours we heard singing resonate from roadside churches.



Three hours into the trip, we picked up Sonny, my translator, and continued into the mountains. (Haiti–Ayiti - means “land of high mountains” in Creole.) Just before we reached the crest of the mountain pass, the paved road ended and became a rocky, washed-out riverbed.

Traveling in the mountains was bone-jarring but beautiful. Lush mountains rose beyond other mountains until they disappeared into the horizon. We passed small houses with coffee beans drying in the front yard. Young children lugged water jugs up the road.

In the small mountain town of Duchity, we stopped to buy bananas from a roadside vendor. Later, Ben told me that the town had an outbreak of cholera the previous week.

After three hours of dodging rocks and the brightly-colored buses that zoomed by, we reached the coastal village of Pestel and put up at Madam Jacqué’s, a house-hotel.

Night sounds resonated through our open rooms. The dogs have ganged up on one yipping mongrel tonight. There’s music and laughing a few feet away. The roosters that run in the town start their calls around 2:30 a.m. Others reply.

During the day, smells permeate the heat. My body odor. My companions’. The acrid smoke from thousands of slow-burning charcoal fires Haitians use for cooking. The clean ocean smell and the smell of the forest after a rainstorm.

The next morning, after a breakfast of seafood, homemade juice, and plantain, Ben told me, “When Haitians pray and say thank you for our daily bread, they’re

literally thankful for their daily bread in a way we can’t know.”

He went off to meet with 19 trained health care workers. They’re the core of what makes his organization effective. Instead of setting

younger children played in front of their tin-roofed house, measuring no more than ten by twenty feet, she spoke about her life. She’s able to send three of her kids to school, which costs 250 gourdes a year – \$6.25

American. Though she hasn’t been able to pay for school, the nuns and teachers still let them come.

They rise at 6 a.m. “Sometimes we eat breakfast,” she told my translator. “When we have it.”

Grande Cayemite Island held the sharpest contrast of my trip. Children swam in the ocean, laughing and waving. On a porch,

men played dominoes, shouting so loudly I thought a fight was breaking out. At the island village of Boucan Philippe, pigs and goats grazed – and defecated – near pools of standing water while people walked by barefoot.

“See that?” Ben said, pointing to pebbles of goat feces near the water. “That’s a recipe for disease.”

At Point Sable on the island, we saw one child with the swollen head characteristic of hydrocephalus. Ben knelt by the crying boy, rubbing his head. He explained to the mother that her son would have to travel without her to the hospital, undergo a long procedure, and stay for up to a year in recovery. “I can’t promise, but if you want I can try to make this happen. Do you want me to try?”

“Wi.” Soft voice. “Yes.”

Later, Ben told me, “I hate it when things happen to children. I just hate it. I don’t know God’s will in everything. But I know Pestel should have clean water. I know the children should have food and education. These are no-brainers.”

Ben’s white skin and tall frame assures that he is noticed. As we left Anse a Macon, an island village of about 3,500 people, Simon, a lanky man in his 30s, approached Ben, upset. He said the village needs help.

“What are your biggest needs?” asked Ben.



(Top) Two health workers give medicine to a boy on Grande Cayemite island, Haiti. (Bottom) The presidential palace lies in ruins in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. (Opposite page) A couple in Point Sable, Haiti, sit on the porch of the house they built from his wages as a health worker for Thriving Villages International. (photos by Lt. Col. James Bishop)

up a clinic and waiting for people to come, Ben hired people from Pestel who go into the area’s 240 remote villages and distribute Vitamin A and deworming drugs. They also do immunizations and measure children’s upper arms for signs of malnutrition. Not only do workers reach 7,000 village kids in a way no blan – white person – could, but the jobs pump essential income into the local economy.

On Monday, I interviewed Elmina, a 26-year-old mother of five who lives in the mountains above Pestel. While Elmina’s

A clinic, a school beyond the 5th grade, Evens translated. "He says that a 34-year-old died in childbirth in a dugout canoe on the way to Pestel for medical help." The baby survived; the father takes care of him.

A crowd had gathered. Simon was talking and gesturing loudly.

In the center of town, a school building sits unused because there is no teacher. It was built in 1986.

"Do any charitable organizations or churches help?" asked Ben.

"Okenn. Okenn," Simon said in Creole. "None. None."

On Wednesday I visited Dr. Seneque Phillippe. He's the town's only doctor, and until recently the only doctor for the 240 towns and 70,000 people in the greater Pestel region. His clinic employs 25 staff, one other doctor for HIV cases, and four nurses.

"When health care was free, we saw 100 people a day. Now it varies," he said. "People can't pay."

I wish I could introduce you to the principal at St. Clare school in Carrefour Citron who said only three of his six teachers

receive a small salary. "This causes teachers to suffer a lot," he said. "Teachers do not consider themselves working here but doing a service to the community. Still, they need a small salary to survive." I wish I could introduce you to Evens Lanot, who manages the projects in-country for Thriving Villages International. He speaks seven languages, has gone to law school, and donates his salary to the orphanage where he volunteers.

Beauty and ugliness mingled in each area we visited. In Port-au-Prince, magazine-



model good looking people in bright clothes stepped over garbage in the dusty streets. The presidential palace stood in ruins from the earthquake. Evens said that the economy is better than it was just before the earthquake.

Coming back to the U.S., I experienced reverse culture-shock, glad to see paved highways, indoor plumbing and reliable electricity. At first, I was hesitant to drink tap water.

Stuck in traffic around New York City, I found myself wondering which is the true

Haiti: the happy people and beautiful land, or the dire poverty and substandard health care? Remarkably, from the little I've seen, it's both.

TROOP TALK | "What was your best career move last year?"



"I tested for a higher position within the pharmacy I currently work for. I passed the test and was promoted to pharmacy technician. Now I'm receiving better pay, better hours and more responsibility."

>>A1C. Emily Keough
439th Logistics Readiness Squadron

"On the civilian side, establishing my business in consulting services for international trade. For the reserve it was starting to study for Senior NCO Academy to put on that next stripe."

>>TSgt. Jack Liu
439th Force Support Squadron



"On the civilian side it was going after a career in law enforcement. On the reserve side -- volunteering to go on a 90 day set of orders here at Westover to help hone my skills in the security forces AFSC."

>>SrA. Edwin Aquinos
439th Security Forces Squadron

YELLOW RIBBON FAQs

by Lt. Col. James Bishop

The National Defense Authorization Act of 2008 established the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program as part of a DoD-wide effort to help the 1.2 million National Guard and Reserve members and their families connect with the best resources available before, during, and after deployments.

Reservists returning from or preparing to go on a deployment, along with their families, attend regional events at resorts where presenters provide information about the benefits they've earned and the resources available to them. They also have an opportunity to visit the many presenters' tables. There is ample opportunity for family time Friday and Saturday evenings.

How much does it cost?

The Air Force Reserve Command funds 100 percent of the program. Reservists are put on military orders. Three meals are provided at the event, and members and their families receive per-diem for meals not provided. Family members or a "designated representative" for single members are put on invitational travel orders. AFRC covers the cost of the family's or designated representative's airline tickets.

Who is eligible?

Anyone who will be, or has been deployed away from family for more than 90 days. "Away from home" could mean you were activated in place at Westover and separated from your family outside the commuting area. The Wing Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program Representative, CMSgt. Michelle

Dunfield, confirms eligibility within established guidelines, but the wing commander ultimately determines eligibility.

How many events are there?

There are approximately 24 events each year, one primarily for the North/South region and one for the West. The size of the events varies from 350-person to much bigger for national events. Some of the past locations have included Virginia Beach Va., Stowe Vt., St. Louis Mo., Philadelphia Penn., Orlando Fla., Myrtle Beach S.C., and Cincinnati Oh.

Where are the next events?

Future venues include Tyson's Corner, Va. and Orlando, Fla. Although the December 2012 event is full, organizers expect



to hold an event every month in 2013.

How many events can I attend?

Every eligible deployer and their family member or designated representative is eligible to attend three Yellow Ribbon Events – one pre-deployment and two post-deployment.

Where do I get more info?

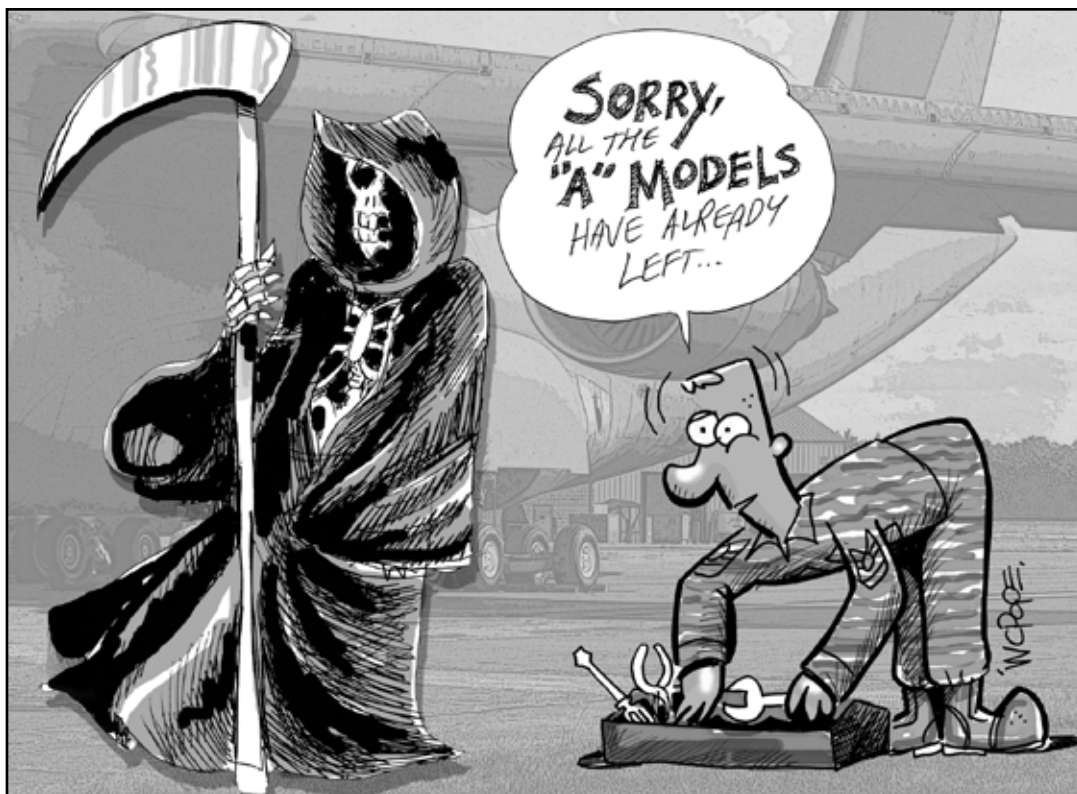
Contact the Yellow Ribbon Office co-located with the Airman and Family Readiness Center and Chapel in Building 1100 at (413) 557-2858/3862. Office hours are Mon-Fri, 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. CMSgt. Dunfield can answer your questions and provide information including eligibility and event locations.

I heard about another Yellow Ribbon program connected with tuition assistance?

Same name. Different benefit. The Yellow Ribbon GI Education Enhancement Program, aka the Yellow Ribbon Program, is a provision of the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008. This program allows degree-granting institutions in the U.S. to voluntarily enter into an agreement with the Veterans Administration to fund tuition expenses that exceed the highest public in-state undergraduate tuition rate. The institution can contribute up to 50% of those expenses and VA will match the same amount as the institution. For more information on the VA Post 9-11 Bill, visit gibill.va.gov or call the Base Education Office at (413) 557-3440.

POPE'S PUNS |

by W.C.Pope



PROMOTIONS |

FACES OF WESTOVER

Colonel

Michael Buoniconti
Colleen Kelley
Dorothy Kleinert
Anthony Perkins



Senior Master Sgt.

Thomas Cowern



Master Sgt.

Jennifer Casas
Erwin Greene
Rafal Grzyb
Michael Kaminsky
Michael Morris



Technical Sgt.

Duane Bryant
Russell Duffy
Sally Granada
Stephen Myllek
James Thuo



Staff Sgt.

Elias Aponte
Alexander Carmel
Matthew Marvin
Craig Moulton
Kevin Pechie
Brian Roman
Willmary Vega



Senior Airman

Derek Aalerud
Nicholas Agosta
Charles Badu
Travis Carpenter
Nicholas Clark
Raphael Dipippo
Justin Feliciano
Paul Goodrow
Jody Harmon
Karol Makusiewicz
Dayna Marcoux
Michael Morais
Raymond Ortiz
Shawn Smith



Airman First Class

Jake Drakakis
Shannon Duffy
Anthony Gentile
Catherine Harrington
Matthew Henry
Joseph Musiak
Michael Page
Omar Perez
Peter Triantafellow



Airman

Jenny Banner
Dillon Childs
Arthur Collins
Pedro Colon
Weston Dean
Matthew Fairbanks
Amber Maciel
Nicholas McNellis
Jayna Milledge
Paul Neves
Robert Wynter
Jonathan Zelisko



A1C. Elaine Rosazza

A1C. Elaine Rosazza
439th Maintenance Squadron

Airman Rosazza was a part time Spanish teacher at a private school, when she talked with her boyfriend about how they could improve their lives, go back to college, and realize the American dream.

"I enlisted in 2010 because I knew I needed a higher education, but I also didn't want to come out of college with a lot of debt," A1C. Rosazza said. "Enlisting was the next step I needed to take in order to fulfill the goals I had set for myself."

Since returning from training, She is celebrating her one year anniversary to her husband, SrA. Nathan Rosazza, and has been fine-tuning her skills in her career field, while considering a degree in either communication or education.

"I have a real passion for teaching," she said. "I feel that everybody has something they are good at, it's just a matter of discovering what that is."

She says that since enlisting, everything has seemingly begun to fall into place. "I had no idea what to expect being in the military, I've been pleasantly surprised with everything that has happened since that decision. I only wish I had this kind of direction in my life when I was in high school."

-- by SrA. Kelly Galloway

RETIREMENTS |

Captain

Andrew Roneker
Susan Hodges

Chief Master Sergeant

Nicole Remy

Senior Master Sergeant

Paul Cyr
Robert Gardner
Ronald Jordan
Karl Sweikhart

Master Sergeant

Karen Roy
Robert Karcz

Technical Sergeant

Richard Page
Christopher Breslin
Mark Nowak
Frank Falcone
Floyd Tolar

Staff Sergeant

Smith Davis

SERVICES CALENDER |

Submitted by Mollie Anello, services marketing assistant

CLUB>> The Club's new alternate location "Lounge" is now open at Building 5550, Monday through Saturday, opening at 3:30 p.m. Pizza and wings are served from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. The Club is utilizing the web with a new Facebook page dedicated to renovation updates and Lounge events. They have already posted photos of the club renovations as they progress toward completion. You can find them at www.facebook.com/westoverarbclub.

BOWL>> Construction continues at the Westover Bowling Center both inside and out. Watch for updates on the grand reopening in few months. www.facebook.com/westoverbowl.

OUTDOOR RECREATION>> Come to the Westover Outdoor Recreation for all of your ski and snowboard rentals. We also have tuning services available ski and snowboard packages available. Call 557-2192.

FITNESS>> There will be a Racquetball Tournament from Jan. 14 to 25. The two week competition will be awarding trophies for 1st and 2nd place. For more information, to sign up or make your court reservations call the Fitness Center at 557-3958.



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Published monthly for Patriots like SSgt. Angel Suarez, Ware, Mass., and more than 3,400 people assigned to Westover Air Reserve Base.



BASE OF THE RISING SUN >> A new day begins at Westover Air Reserve Base, as one of many days in early December when we were greeted by amazing sunrises. (photo by Mylyn Advey, stringer photographer)