



America's First Choice

CONTACT

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Magazine for and about Air Force Reserve members assigned
to the 349th Air Mobility Wing, Travis Air Force Base, California

August 2006



**349th Communications Squadron
takes a "Jump Start"**

Value, benefits of teamwork

As I've travel throughout the base and have had an opportunity to meet and greet many of you at your workstations, there is one common theme that resonates—the tremendous degree of cooperation and teamwork. One of the benefits of teamwork is synergy which, simply stated, means one plus one equals three. Now before you critique me on my math let me explain. It's important to be in sync, which is why the military emphasizes procedural discipline so heavily in training and out in the field. Two or three individuals working at odds on a project is obviously a bad situation. However, when those same two or three individuals work closely together by sharing thoughts and coordinating actions they turn the work of those same two or three into the results produced by three or four people. That's right, good teamwork is a multiplier. Teamwork isn't something that just happens, it's a natural occurrence based on the attitude and skill each of us brings to our workplace every day. A positive attitude at work for me starts every morning when I greet the gate guards with a simple smile and a hello. In any organization there is always a "Captain of the team," but it's up to each of us to be effective team players. As a youngster, I remember a baseball coach of mine who reminded his team that there are no unimportant positions on a team and I agree. Picture a three-legged tripod and try to figure out which leg is unimportant; there isn't one! If you remove any one of them, the tripod will no longer function. There are several things in addition to attitude that contribute to teamwork so

let's take a look at just a few:

1. Skills: Even the most skilled among us needs periodic training and study to stay on top of our game. Refresher training, advanced level schooling and professional military education are adapting to an expeditionary Air Force culture.

Technology is constantly changing and as leaders in today's Air Force so must we. Since every Airman is a leader, we should all embrace these changes!

2. Duties and Responsibilities: Your AFSC defines the role you have in today's Air Force. Each of us has specific responsibilities that others are dependant upon. When we don't perform as expected it creates confusion. In a worst case scenario, confusion can lead to injury or a loss of war-fighting capabilities. Don't accept mediocrity.

3. Professionalism: Wear of the uniform, rendering proper military courtesies, being the best in your business, motivating, mentoring, concern, and compassion; these are just some of the ingredients that add up to what being a professional is all about.

Around the Wing: August 8th marks a new chapter in the history of Team Travis and the 349th AMW as we welcome the arrival of the first of thirteen C-17s. With the great community support the men and women of Travis receive, it's only fitting the first aircraft will be named, "The Spirit of Solano." Bring your family out for all the jubilant festivities; it should be a fun-filled day.

Last month, **1st Lt. Robin Jackson, Command Chief Master Sgt. Patricia Thornton** and I traveled to Washington,



by **Col. Robert K. Millmann, Jr.**
Wing Vice Commander

D.C., to meet with several elected representatives; congressmen, senators and in some cases, their legislative liaisons. Basic Allowance for Housing, retirement, military construction projects, operations tempo and a host of other quality-of-life issues were discussed. If you haven't taken the time to write your elected officials, I ask you to consider doing so. Change in the nation's capitol starts with the constituents in a representative's local district or state. That's all of us!

Congratulations to **Lt. Col. Stephen R. Rickert**, 301st Airlift Squadron and **Maj. James F. Waddington**, 349th Component Maintenance Squadron. Both assumed command of these outstanding organizations late last month. We are looking forward to your leadership.

In closing, let me say the pride and professionalism you project in your professional and personnel lives will ultimately define the degree of success we all enjoy as teammates in the greatest Air Force on earth. I'm especially proud of the contributions you make every day in keeping our nation free. Enjoy the rest of the summer; drink lots of water and be safe. Hopefully my family and I will see you at the Solano Thunderbirds baseball game, Aug. 5, supporting the 349th Top Three council's fundraising efforts.

We all experience peer pressure; let your peer pressure be positive

by **Chaplain (Capt.) Herbert Hodde III**
349th Air Mobility Wing

Last week my oldest girl, at the mature age of nine, came to me with a simple request.

"Daddy," she said.

"Yes, princess," I replied.

"When can I get my ears pierced?" she requested.

Before I responded, I must first tell you the very thought of any type of pain to my little girl's body leaves her terrorized. She does not like needles--what little child does--but, even the notion of having a

band-aid removed from her delicate little body leaves her terrorized. One time she saw her little brother suffer a gash to the head from jumping off the bed. He thought it was cool; she passed out.

"Sweetheart, do you know what happens when they pierce your ears?" I asked.

"Oh yes," she responded with great knowledge. "Cali had hers done the other day. She said they took a big needle and poked your ear with it. It hurt for a few minutes, but her earrings look really cool."

And thus it begins. Just yesterday we

were buying her Care Bears for her birthday, now she wants pierced ears. My little girl is starting the process of growing up. Today it's pierced ears, tomorrow it's a date to the prom. Honestly, I didn't think I was overacting. I decided right then and there to do two things. One, forbid her to play with Cali ever again, and two, lock her in her room until she is twenty-one. I am sure if her mother and I were to take her to the mall she would probably back down, but a larger issue has arose. The peer pressure

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photo by Staff Sgt. John Herrick, 934th Communications Flight

Aim for the sky: Senior Airman Randy Foster, 349th Communications Squadron, prepares communications equipment for operation in a field environment at Travis while participating in an inaugural exercise called Jump Start 2006. The exercise was conducted for two weeks in June, and included more than 50 reservists from throughout the Air Force Reserve Command communications career field.

Top 10 life lessons learned

Recently I had the honor of addressing the men and women attending the Air Force Reserve Command Senior Noncommissioned Officer Leadership Course hosted at Selfridge Air National Guard Base near Detroit, Michigan.

I was asked to discuss my career and what I had learned over these past twenty-three years of service. Some of what I shared with them you read last month...being an agent of change and staying relevant. The rest you may have heard me say along the way. One of the Travis attendees asked me to share it in my column so here goes...my Top 10 life lessons in no particular order:

1. Never underestimate yourself or others. You'll always be surprised.
2. Remember there are always at least 5-plus sides to every issue. Get the whole story.
3. Be ready when opportunity knocks. Don't wait for the opportunity to be available and then prepare. If you're unprepared, the life you want will pass you by.
4. Be informed. Communicate in layers: emails; phone calls; meetings; Commanders' Calls; fliers; one on one and more. Share your knowledge.
5. You've heard this one many time - get comfortable with being uncomfortable,

which includes the following:

- a. Always do the right thing. (What is your gut/conscience telling you?)
- b. Admit when you're wrong. If it's in a large setting, admit it in the same setting.
- c. If at all possible (and it's almost always possible), apologize in person with no excuses.
- d. Give your people honest feedback. Schedule it regularly. Get honest feedback about yourself. Define expectations. Hold your people and yourself accountable.
6. Be the best at what you do.
7. Rather than nice, be kind.
8. ABC-Always Be Cool (Chief Maddux taught me this one). When everything is escalating around you, be the voice of reason, the cool head.
9. Listen. When people want or need to talk with you, turn off your cell phone, turn away from the computer, or whatever distractions may be present, and give them your full attention. They'll know you care.
10. Don't gossip. It's ugly and everyone knows that as soon as they leave the room, they are the new topic of conversation for the gossiper. This destroys trust, the foundation of any relationship, personal or professional.
11. Always take care of your people! Remember, no one cares how much you know until you show them how much you care. You hear me say that all the time, and



By Command Chief Master Sgt. Patricia A. Thornton

it's not original to me, but it really resonates. The mission will take care of itself if you take care of your people.

12. Past choices create present circumstances.
 13. Laugh. Have fun. Work hard. Play hard. Don't take yourself too seriously.
- Did I say ten? Oh well, remember the new math, base 13. Seriously, as I told the folks attending the Selfridge course, really this all boils down to the core values... *Integrity first; Service before self; Excellence in all we do.* Hone your skills, do the right thing, take care of your people and, all the while, have fun doing it. It's all about building a better world. We in the military defend freedom for ourselves, our families, our friends, our communities, our nation, to create that better world. To do this we make choices, life choices. As Grandma Moses said and I've quoted repeatedly, "And life is what we make it, always has been, always will be." You choose. Make yours great.

Wing Enlisted Workshop provides tools for achieving goals

*by Master Sgt. Kari Sumner
349th Component Maintenance Squadron*

It's that time of year again. It's time for you to evaluate your goals. It's time to determine how far you have come toward reaching your goals and it may be time to update your goals or set new goals entirely.

Whatever your goals are, you may want some help or need some direction in setting and achieving them.

This year's Wing Enlisted Workshop, Oct. 18 – 20, sponsored by the 349th Air Mobility Wing Rising Six Council, is a fantastic forum designed to help you evaluate your goals and give you experienced direction in setting and achieving new goals. It's an excellent tool to get you back on the road toward reaching achievable and realistic goals.

The WEW will showcase dynamic guest speakers including the commander of 4th Air Force, Maj. Gen. Robert Duignan; Air Force Reserve Command Chief Master Sergeant Jack Winsett; and 4th AF Command Chief Master Sergeant Kenneth Mitchell.

In addition, various professional organizations such as the Air Force Reserve recruiter, Air Force Association, Air Force

Sergeant's Association, the 349th AMW Top Three Council and the Rising Six Council, to name a few, will host exhibits and will be available for questions throughout the event.

The theme of this year's WEW is "*Family, Service, and Self.*" The focus of the WEW will be to guide you toward the organizations in your area best equipped to help you juggle the demands of everyday life. The guest speakers will share stories on how they achieved their goals and will talk about the importance of "*Family, Service and Self*" in today's Air Force Reserve.

WEW planning meetings are held at 2 p.m. on Sunday of each UTA in the 349th AMW Headquarters Bldg. 112 Conference Room. Volunteers are always welcome.

Points of contact for the WEW are: Master Sgt. Kari Sumner, (707) 424-2072, email kari.sumner@travis.af.mil; Technical Sgt. Glenn Miller, 349th Logistics Readiness Flight, (707) 424-1578, email glenn.miller@travis.af.mil; and Senior Airman E.B. Lynch, 349th Mission Support Squadron, (707) 424-1615, email eberechi.lynch@travis.af.mil.

Mark your calendars, coordinate your participation status and attend this dynamic event. See you there.

945th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron stands up

Story and photo by
Staff Sgt. Meredith Mingledorff
349th Air Mobility Wing Public Affairs

The 945th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron was reactivated in a “stand-up” ceremony June 25. “This is another great day for Team Travis, as we reactivate the 945th AMXS, to serve as proud Reserve partners to our newly formed 860th Maintenance Squadron on the active duty side,” said Col. William B. Anholt, 349th Maintenance Group commander. “These two new squadrons, the latest addition to Team Travis, will work together to maintain America’s newest and greatest airlifter, the C-17 Globemaster III.”

The new 200-person Reserve maintenance squadron, commanded by Maj. Roger S. Law, is the descendent of the 938th Consolidated Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, Hamilton Air Force Base, Calif., and will be responsible



Major Roger S. Law, first commander of the newly reactivated 945th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, addresses the audience at the 945th AMXS stand-up ceremony June 25. Major Law is also known as Mr. Law during the week, serving as Boeing Aircraft’s director and manager of the C-17 program at Travis.

for the delivery and maintenance of 13 new, C-17 Globemaster III aircraft assigned to Travis AFB.

During his comments at the ceremony, Colonel Anholt recognized Travis’ seamless integration of Reserve, active duty, civilians and contractors to provide “top quality aircraft maintenance to support our air mobility mission.”

The Colonel made clear that Major Law was a prime example of this type of integration and that he was pleased to see him take command.

“Major Law’s selection as the first squadron commander of the newly reactivated 945th illustrates this strong sense of team work,” said Colonel Anholt.

“See, Major Law the Reservist is also Mr. Law, who during the week, serves as Boeing Aircraft’s director and manager of the C-17 program here at Travis,” he said. “Major Law is a natural choice to lead the 945th, bringing a wealth of knowledge from

his civilian job.”

In his first address to the men and women of the 945th AMXS, Major Law promised his troops his time and commitment.

He thanked the squadron for their dedication to military service and assured them that mission success required the help and support of every single member.

“I can not do my job without each and every one of you,” said Major Law. “It is my job to give you the tools and the training to do the job safely. It’s my responsibility, it’s your responsibility.”

Major Law added his troops should maintain high expectations of him and assured the rest of the wing.

“The 945th will be ready... we’ll let our actions speak louder than words.”



Maj. Roger S. Law

Major Law is from Taylor, Texas. After graduation from high school in 1981 he enlisted in the Air Force as a jet mechanic. During his active-duty career, he worked on B-52D, G- and H-model bombers as well as KC-135A model tankers while stationed at Carswell Air Force Base, Texas, and March AFB, Calif.

Major Law is a 1988 graduate of Texas A&M University, Commerce, Texas and in June of that same year, began working for Boeing (then McDonnell Douglas) as a structural design/liaison engineer on the C-17 program in Long Beach, Calif.

In 1990, Major Law completed his master’s degree in engineering and technical management from West Coast University, Los Angeles, Calif.

In April of 1990, he rejoined the military, becoming a member of the California Air National Guard stationed at March AFB where he worked on F-4D/E and RF-4C fighter and reconnaissance aircraft and KC-135E tankers.

In September 1991, he followed the C-17 aircraft to Edwards Air Force Base, Calif., as an aircraft systems and structural engineer in the C-17 flight test program.

In November of 1993, as part of the C-17 site activation team, he was assigned as the lead C-17 aircraft systems structural engineer at Charleston AFB, S.C.

Major Law then transferred to the Georgia Air National Guard to continue in his military career where he maintained C-130 aircraft and later joined the Air Force Reserve at Charleston, S.C., and worked on the C-17.

In June of 1995, he was commissioned through the Deserving Airman Commissioning Program. He was then assigned to maintenance organizations as officer-in-charge and flight commander in the 165th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, Georgia ANG and then the 315th Maintenance Squadron and Aircraft Generation Squadrons at Charleston AFB, S.C.

In June 1999, he was chosen to stand up the first C-17 Aircraft Maintenance Unit at McChord AFB, Wash., and later standing up the second C-17 AMU as flight commander of the 446th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron at McChord AFB.

After serving as the deployed maintenance commander in the 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing, Balad, Iraq, April through August 2004, Major Law joined the 349th Air Mobility Wing as a maintenance operations officer, 349th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron. At the same time, Major Law also accepted the position as the Boeing Director and as the Travis Base Manager of the C-17 program.

349th Air Mobility Wing ‘Ironman’ willing to

by Master Sgt. Wendy Weidenhamer
349th Air Mobility Wing Public Affairs

Imagine riding a bike for a 112 miles without stopping, then running a 26.2 mile marathon and finishing off with a 2.4 mile swim; dragging tired arms that feel like lead across the finish line, then perhaps the reason this grueling event is called the “Ironman” might make more sense.

Taking on the Ironman challenge along with about 2,000 other participants June 25, at the Coeur d’Alene Triathlon, in Idaho, is a member of the Air Force Reserve, Chief Master Sgt. Terry Monges, chief boom operator for the 79th Air Refueling Squadron and an Air Reserve Technician.

Choosing to participate in an event like this might seem unimaginable, but with the support of his family, friends and his unit, the Chief stuck to a demanding training schedule lasting six months to prepare for this, his third triathlon.

“Friends and family have asked me how, or more importantly, why, I would want to swim 2.4 miles, bike 112 and run 26.2 miles. My answer is very simple, I do it for my family, my friends, my co-workers and my health. If I can inspire a single person within my sphere of influence, then all of my sacrifice is worth the effort,” said Chief Monges.

What initially motivated Chief Monges, a quiet, humble and unassuming figure, to

start exercising was his twin brother, Troy, who threw down the fitness gauntlet. He encouraged the Chief, who was about 35 pounds heavier then, to get fit by riding a racing bike that he would give the Chief.

“He said I could have the bike for as long as I rode it. That was four years ago and I haven’t stopped yet,” said the Chief with a smile.

The Chief rode that bike for a year when Troy took the challenge to the next level and signed them both up for a triathlon without asking the Chief. Surprised, but not one to pass up a challenge, Chief Monges raced with his brother. When the dust cleared Troy had beaten him but in another respect the Chief was also a winner, for he caught the fever for staying in shape and competing. And he eventually lost those thirty-five extra pounds, too. Staying in shape also gave him the opportunity to beat Troy the very next time they competed together.

Chief Monges’ enthusiasm for staying in-shape and for facing the next triathlon challenge continues and he decided to make helping others a part of the event for him. In one race he raised \$1,000 for the Fisher House, and for the Coeur d’Alene race he and a fellow competitor, Mary James, have spearheaded an “Ironman for Autism” fund-raiser where they hope to raise \$10,000.

“You must stand up for a cause you believe in. If everybody did maybe the world would be a better place,” said Chief Monges. “Plus I feel like I’m giving back,” he added.

Having a five-year-old daughter who was diagnosed at three with autism, Chief Monges has seen the importance of early intervention. He wants to help other parents with children who may have autism to have

“You must stand up for a cause you believe in. If everybody did maybe the world would be a better place.”

-- Chief Master Sgt. Terry Monges,
79th Air Refueling Squadron

access to diagnostic services—services which can be very expensive.

“It’s so hard for children with autism to express what they think and feel to the world around them,” said the Chief. “It was just heartbreaking to watch my daughter playing hide and seek in a group setting and not understand what to do.”

By staying positive Chief Monges has learned a lot from spending time with his daughter.

“I’ve learned how really unique everyone is and to be more tolerant and sensitive to those differences,” he said.



Courtesy photo

Moments before the start of a “Vineman” race July 2005, Chief Master Sgt. Terry Monges, 79th Air Refueling Squadron (left) and his twin brother, Troy Monges, a Safety Manager for Ralph’s food stores in Southern California, pose for a photo. The Vineman is a half Ironman distance race 1.3 mile swim, 56 mile bike, and 13.2 mile run.



Chief Master Sgt. Terry Monges, Chief Boom Operator in the instructor’s seat in the boom compartment of a KC-135, as he goes through a flight check with boom operator, Chief Master Sgt. Diaz, 79th ARS boom operator, as he goes through a flight check.

to give it his all for family, health, charity

So with his goals in mind, intense training comes into focus. Training is a part of daily life, he trains four hours a day which adds up to 20 hours a week when he's not competing and about 28 hours a week when he is preparing for a triathlon. Chief Monges jumps or swims into a full day that starts with swimming from 5:30-7:00 a.m., an hour of exercise at lunch and ends with a six-mile bike ride. And on those inevitable days when he doesn't feel like exercising, he is soon pushed out the door by thoughts of walking up to that starting line unprepared and visualizing the "fear" of that moment.

Added to his busy training day has been a college schedule filled with the requirements for his bachelor of science degree in industrial technology which he recently completed at Southern Illinois University.

When he is not training for a triathlon or going to school he is part of another team, the Air Force Reserve. He has been an Air Reserve Technician for nine years with the 79th ARS. In his office wearing a flight suit accentuated by his tan complexion and warm smile, the Chief sits at his desk with several photos of his family on a table nearby. One photo in

particular stands out of his son and daughter wearing a big black paper mustache and huge smiles.

"It never ceases to amaze me the generosity and words of encouragement I have received from my friends and extended family in the 70th and 79th Air Refueling Squadrons. Without their continued support, the success of this "Ironman for Autism" charity would not be possible," said Chief Monges.

"These gifted professionals deserve credit and praise for the selfless acts of kindness and generosity they give for the benefit of others." Chief Monges added, "They are the true heroes in this Ironman story."

While training takes a lot of his time the Chief sees many benefits from learning how to orchestrate such a demanding schedule, benefits which have been useful in his job at the 79th ARS.

Learning how to manage time successfully, to set realistic goals, build patience and have a more positive attitude and outlook is very important. They help to reinforce a positive role model along with the importance of staying fit, said Chief Monges.

Even during the course of his busy day, hiring or training boom operators or doing paperwork, he makes time for the little things like signing a going-away card for a member of the unit who is transferring and quickly slipping in a gift, greeting friends in the unit as they pass by his office, or taking time to "just listen."

"I remember a number of times when active duty airman would come to the



Courtesy photo

Most days start off with exercise for Chief Master Sgt. Terry Monges, 79th Air Refueling Squadron. Here, wearing his "Mad Cow" triathlon team uniform for the first time, the Chief rests during an early morning training ride in Davis, Calif.

Chief's office to talk and he sat quietly and listened, that really touched me," said Mr. Matti Raivio, flight engineer scheduler for the 79th ARS. "Sometimes you just need someone to listen to you," he added.

And while exercise is a big part of his day so is the Chief's family. He helps out with breakfast and then helps gets the kids ready for school. And in the evening he is also there to help with dinner. After dinner he makes sure he spends some quality one-on-one time with each of his children and a good children's book.

But, after the sun goes down on another busy day, this Ironman shows how that name may include more than muscles, sweat and endurance along with the desire to win, it may also include the ability to stay in touch with our human side--with a heart. Go Chief!

(Editor's note: To find out more on "Ironman" events visit the official site for the Ironman Triathlon World Championships at <http://ironman.com>)



Courtesy photo

ator for the 79th Air Refueling Squadron (right) sits of a KC-10 aircraft while observing Master Sgt. Joe h procedures of air refueling another KC-10

Tuskegee Airman: mentor, motivator, friend

by Lt. Col. Dale Andrews
301st Airlift Squadron

The autumn of 1975 was, in many parts of the country, a difficult time to serve in the U.S. military. Television images of U.S. Marines abandoning the U.S. Embassy in Saigon, Vietnam, were still fresh in the minds of the American public. Cambodian Khmer Rouge rebels had even managed to inflict severe casualties on a U.S. military force attempting to rescue the crew of the cargo ship *S.S. Mayaguez*.

The reputation of the U.S. military was at an all-time low. Consequently, as a member of a high school Junior Reserve Officer Training Cadet unit in Detroit, Mich., and having aspirations of attending the Air Force Academy, I suffered through more than a few epithets, and harangues about my totally ‘uncool’ aspirations. Sometimes, the motivation to serve was hard to come by.

Now, enter a diminutive, confident, outspoken man with an ‘Afro’, and a goatee, who was definitely ‘cool’. And more importantly, he was a former fighter pilot who had retired from the Air Force Reserve as a lieutenant colonel; voila, instant motivation!

His story begins Aug. 12, 1944, was a bright sunny morning over the southern coast of France as 16 P-51s of the 332nd Fighter Group, in flights of four, approached their target: radar picket sites on the cliffs above Toulon harbor. Lt. Alexander Jefferson’s plane was the 16th plane in the last group of four, “Tail End Charlie.”

After experiencing difficulty releasing his wing tanks, Lieutenant Jefferson was lagging behind the rest of the formation and “red-lined” his gauges to regain his position for the attack run on the target. The radar antennae were used to detect ships approaching the harbor, and they would greatly hinder Operation Anvil, the planned invasion of southern France. The determination of Lieutenant Jefferson and his fellow “Tuskegee Airmen” to remove that hindrance was matched by the defending German anti-aircraft gunners’ desire to hang on to their radar warning sites. Consequently, when Lieutenant Jefferson arrived over the target the German gunners having had fifteen

previous opportunities to practice were well prepared for his arrival. An anti-aircraft shell passed directly through the floor of his cockpit and through the top of the canopy, setting his aircraft ablaze. With only 50 feet of altitude between his aircraft and the ground, Lieutenant Jefferson pulled his burning aircraft up into a loop, and bailed out. He practically landed on top of the gunners he had been attacking, and was immediately captured. He spent the next nine months in a series of German Prisoner of War camps.

Lt. Col. Alexander “Jeff” Jefferson, USAFR, retired, was well versed in the difficulties of serving his country during trying times. He survived a segregated Army Air Force, air combat, and life as a POW. His record of achievement and his demeanor gave young people like me the encouragement to endure whatever adversities we faced in our desire to serve. I graduated from the Air Force Academy, and earned my wings as an Air Force pilot.

As I approach the end of my military career, ‘Jeff’ continues to inspire young men and women to serve with excellence as a member of the speaker’s bureau of the Tuskegee Airmen. I look forward to meeting up with him once a year at the annual Tuskegee Airmen’s convention.

Incidentally, it turns out ‘Jeff’ was quite lucky that August day in 1944. The German officer in command of the anti-aircraft battery which brought down his aircraft happened to be a graduate of the University of Michigan, and was quite fond of Detroit, Jeff’s hometown. He treated Lieutenant Jefferson cordially, and explained to him that it was fortunate that he had been flying at such a low altitude. The gunners had timed their shells to explode at 500 feet. The shell that struck his aircraft had simply passed through it without exploding, thereby saving his life. You can read all about it in ‘Jeff’s’ book, *Red Tail Captured, Red Tail Free*.

We all face difficult times in our service in the war on terrorism, ‘Jeff’s’ example serves as a guidepost for all of us, and reminds us of a proud legacy of African-American service to this country in both peacetime and war.

(Editor’s note: Anyone wanting information about the Tuskegee Airmen and their contributions to military history or to join a chapter of the Tuskegee Airmen to help continue the legacy, should visit their web site at: tuskegeeairmen.org. For membership in the local Travis Air Force Base Lee A. Archer Tuskegee Airmen Chapter, contact Mr. Morris Jones, at (707) 644-9356.)



Courtesy photo

Lt. Col. Dale Andrews, 301st Airlift Squadron, (right) thanks Lt. Col. Alexander “Jeff” Jefferson, USAFR (retired), for mentoring and motivating him as a young man, and especially for being his friend over the years.

Operation Gratitude-brunch of champions

Story and photos by
Master Sgt. Wendy Weidenhamer
 349th Air Mobility Wing Public Affairs

Operation Gratitude, sponsored by the Travis Reserve Top Three Council, took the California Veteran's Home in Yountville by storm on June 17, serving up a champagne brunch that included pancakes and ham and eggs with all the trimmings, along with a hearty helping of good humor.

"I think it's great that those who are now active service members have come to honor those who came before them," said Jill Techel, the mayor of Napa.

Making an event like this work takes a lot of volunteers and before it was over 120 military members, active and reserve, and their families worked together to make this event a success.

Getting ready for the event started the night before when more than 30 volunteers completed prep work and set up a huge barbecue grill. In the dining room, rows and rows of white tables with matching chairs were perfectly placed among the red, white and blue room decorations.

Volunteers arrived before 7:30 a.m. on Saturday to finish setting up and begin the job of cooking enough pancakes and scrambled eggs for more than 200 people.

As the morning began to heat up, Technical Sgt. Derryl Hopson, a 349th

Component Maintenance Squadron propulsion specialist, and Senior Airman Steven Bojorques, 349th Memorial Affairs Squadron, services technician, sliced ham outside by the shade of a lone bush.

Meanwhile in the dining room, about one hour early, some curious residents walked or rolled their wheelchairs in to look around and were greeted by volunteers who took time to just chat.

Travis AFB Honor Guard member Staff Sgt. Matthew Stohner, 349th Aeromedical Staging Squadron, medical administration technician, took the time to put the final touches on the POW/MIA table with precise placement of table settings guided by military tradition.

As the time for brunch drew near, a line of curious faces formed in the hallway. The military escorts took their places and officially escorted each veteran into the dining room, while a pianist from Air Mobility Command Band of the Golden West played quietly in the background.

With this huge turnout, it seemed to be a day that many of the residents looked forward to.

"I love to mingle with the people from Travis. Sometimes you see the same people from last year," said Dave Wells, a Navy veteran. "I always like to find out who got promoted," he said as he smiled.

"I love it! I look forward to it when people come here from the outside, from the military, to visit," said Sol Gruber, who wasn't sure if any of his three sons would be visiting for Father's Day, the next day.

Throughout the morning the volunteers were busy constantly with seemingly endless tasks but none had complaints.

"I volunteered today to honor the heroes. I think it's important to remember them, they gave everything for us," said Technical Sgt. Michelle Hammer, 945th



The troops roll in: Fourth grader, Cailin Jensen, daughter of Senior Master Sgt. Sherry Jensen, 349th Component Maintenance Squadron, escorts "Grumpy" Edward Wodzieski to brunch at the California Veteran's Home.

Aircraft Maintenance Squadron.

Col. Robert Millmann, vice commander of the 349th Air Mobility Wing, spoke and thanked the veterans for their service and sacrifices.

The event ended with Senior Master Sgt. Janice Lambard, Top Three Council president, who drew names and gave away several DVDs, blankets, books, clocks, DVD players, and boom boxes.

The many gifts were donated by community businesses and many of the volunteers, said Senior Master Sgt. Alice Munoz, the Wing Chaplain's Office superintendent.

Slowly, the room emptied and the sea of

faces from the past, still connected to that military camaraderie, wearing hats and T-shirts that reflected every branch of the service, quietly left the room. But, hopefully, not from our memories.



Apple of his eye: Staff Sgt. Angel Tellechea, 60th Medical Operations Squadron, brought his four-month-old son, Frankie, to the Operation Gratitude brunch, and Sol Gruber, a former Army mess sergeant, wanted to hold him.



Eggs over scrambled: Staff Sgt. Teresa Gomez, 349th Memorial Affairs Squadron, scrambles eggs on a grill set up outside the dining room at the California Veteran's Home.

Why do we do this? Why Reservist answer the call

by Col. Michael Higginson
940th Mission Support Group

It's 4:45 a.m. Saturday morning of a unit training assembly weekend and you're the only one awake in your house. You hit the start button on the coffee maker, shower and put on your uniform. You give your spouse or significant other a peck on their still-asleep face, fill up your to-go cup with coffee and hit the road.

Your friends are all still in bed. The only reason they'd be up this early is to go fishing or hunting. But you're going to drive an hour and a half, sign in, run a mile and a half, get a typhoid shot, take a career development course test, go to a commander's call, attend a training session or two, work at your duty station for several hours, sign out and drive back home.

Sunday is going to be pretty much the same, and then you roll right into Monday and you're headed back to the civilian job. And on top of all that, if you haven't recently deployed for an extended period of time, chances are you will soon. So, why are you doing this to yourself? Money? Fame and glory? Probably not....

The answer to the "why?" in a reservist's life is probably a little complex. We do what we do for a combination of reasons that usually adds up to an answer that is larger than the sum of its parts.

We usually enjoy the field we serve in;

security forces folks usually like law enforcement, pilots like flying, etc. We usually like the people we work with in our reserve assignments. They are a separate set of friends from our civilian friends and, hey, the more friends the better.

We are generally proud of the work we do and it makes us feel good. We can see the results of our labor and it gives us a feeling of worth.

Our civilian friends often admire us for our dedication and we all like admiration. And, yeah, they do pay us something (albeit, some more than others and often not enough), and don't forget the typhoid shots are free.

But I think the real answer to the "why?" is often private and much more noteworthy. I can sum it up for myself with this quick anecdote about my dad.

Dad was a Kentucky boy and former coal miner who joined the Army Air Corps during World War II. He worked in aircraft maintenance his entire 30-year career and retired as a chief warrant officer. Dad was one of only 17 CWO4's remaining in the Air Force at that time.

After he retired he began to suffer terribly from Alzheimer's or dementia. When I took him golfing for the last time, he had reached the point in his disease where he didn't even recognize me, his oldest child. Dad was 80 years old at the time, three years before his death.

At the pro shop on this last father-son golf outing, I paid both of our green fees

and started for the first tee. As I walked away from the counter, my dad opened his old wallet and took out the twenty dollar bill my mom always made sure he had with him. He gave it to the clerk who had just taken my money.



The clerk told my dad, "Your friend has already paid for your golf." My dad looked at the clerk as he handed him his twenty and said, "I want you to take this and buy a new American flag. The one you're flying out front is faded and ragged and when you fly that flag, you should fly it right."

Well, I retrieved Dad's twenty from the dumbfounded clerk on the way out, but we were only able to stumble and fumble our way through three holes of golf before we called it quits. But that morning my beautiful old man, who didn't even recognize his own son or the game he had loved for 50 years, did somehow remember the wonderful pride he felt for the flag that represented his country.

This story makes it a little easier for me to hit the button on that coffee maker on a UTA morning. I also think it helps explain why many of us continue to do this work. My dad would be proud of all of our Citizen Warriors and he would thank you as I am.

Peer pressure...

(Continued from Page 2)

is not out in full force; however, I can see it begin to loom on the horizon.

When taken in the right context, peer pressure can be a good thing. When it forces you to do something against your will, against your belief, or against your honor, then it becomes a problem. From the youngest recruit to the oldest Airman, all of us at one time have had to deal with peer pressure.

The first form of negative persuasion is to go along with the crowd. Let's face it, no one wants to go it alone. We are all taught to have a wing man, but when the crowd starts going down the wrong path, it's time to revisit one's priorities. If all you seek in life is the approval of others,

then you become nothing more than a mirror reflecting those around you. This limits your God-given abilities and makes you less effective than who you really are.

Secondly, if all you seek in life is pleasure, than your life is nothing more than a carnival. It's going to be fun for a while, but sooner or later the glitz and glamour will fade and you will end up bored from the monotonous adrenaline rush. The cotton candy buzz will die and you will soon be left wondering where you will get your next big buzz.

Finally, if all you seek is power in life, then you've become nothing more than a ravenous wolf. You will devour all of those in your path. You will utilize peer pressure not to reinforce the good in people but to support you in your

destructive habit. Your life will be inward focused instead of outward focused. People will be viewed as an ends to a mean and not as individuals.

When Senior Airman Danielle Williams, chaplain assistant, and I get the privilege of participating in the newcomer's briefing, I am amazed at the diversity of men and women. Enlisted, as well as officer, have gathered here from all walks of life, with different cultural, religious and even political backgrounds. They come together to form a harmonious team committed to a common cause. If I can encourage those around me to ascribe and devote themselves to a greater cause than themselves, than I will have achieved the proper type of peer pressure.

ECAMP Inspection to take place at Travis

by Patti Schwab-Holloway
349th Air Mobility Wing Public Affairs

Travis Air Force Base is getting ready for the external Environmental Compliance Assessment Management Program evaluation, which will be conducted Aug. 28 through Sept. 1.

ECAMP assessments are a “snapshot” in time of the status of Travis’ compliance with federal, state and local environmental laws and regulations and Air Force instructions. The ECAMP is an opportunity for Travis to be assessed with regard to the installation’s execution of its mission as it relates to environmental compliance.

Through ECAMP the Air Force is able to identify and correct environmental deficiencies, preventing both environmental damage and penalties. In Air Mobility Command, every base holds an external ECAMP in three year intervals, with an internal ECAMP taking place in the off years. This year’s ECAMP will be external.

During the ECAMP, AMC assessors will be conducting a comprehensive review of the base environmental management plans. They will be specifically looking for areas of environmental noncompliance and the root causes or responsible organizations for the

shortfalls. They will suggest corrective actions and take time to recognize positive observations. The information gathered by the evaluators will help the base complete its mission while maintaining environmental excellence. It also helps to ensure a better future for the Air Force, citizens and future generations, while preventing environmental damage and avoiding costly violations, fines and civil penalties.

Examples of areas the ECAMP team will be looking at are: air emissions, construction recycling, dumpster management, office recycling, hazardous materials safety and storage, inventory records, spill records, training documentation, inspection logs, plans compliance, airfield coordination and compliance reporting, along with other environmental issues such as the recycling programs and program management.

Positive findings highlighted will be areas that exceed standards. Negative ECAMP findings range from “significant,” which indicate the need for immediate action to protect human health, safety, the environment or the installation mission, to “minor,” which suggests potential noncompliance with a Department of Defense or Department of the Air Force instruction, regulation, policy or management practice.

To make sure you are prepared visit the Travis AFB Environmental Management web site at: <https://w3.travis.af.mil/60ces/cev>.



Promotions



Chief Master Sergeant

Terry L. Kirkbride, 349th EMS
Berger S. Nuusa, 349th AES
Nicholas C. Suarez, 55th APS



Senior Master Sergeant

Edward K. Downs, 312th AS
Anthony Hall III, 349th AES



Master Sergeant

Dennis F. Balinsat, 45th APS
Terri K. Bernatzke, 349th OSF
Stephanie Z. Filip, 349th MDS
Paul H. Ikeda, 45th APS
Russell P. Langley, 349th SFS
Jeannette M. Louie, 45th APS
Duane R. Nosbisch, 301st AS
Brian L. Robinson, 349th MDS
Leeann Stephan, 82nd APS
John D. Willoughby, II, 301st AS



Technical Sergeant

Arthur C. Aberilla, 82nd APS
Will F. Blackwell, 349th AES
Lonnie A. Clute, 349th CS
Mark D. Coffield, 82nd APS
David J. Flucker, 349th LRF
Wende A. Gallagher, 349th AMDS

April H. Oakman, 349th MOF
Lee C. Pittson, 749th AMXS
Barbara Powell, 349th MAS
David M. Renschler, 349th LRF
Daun R. Scully, 349th AMDS
Bob O. Wida, 349th LRF



Staff Sergeant

Robert J. Andrada, 55th APS
Jeffrey M. Brinton, 349th CES
Eric D. Curtis, 301st AS
Roselyn G. Davis, 349th AMDS
Tammy S. Elam, 349th CES
Lawrence J. Ford, 349th SFS
Jason A. Gregory, 349th EMS
David R. Harvey, 349th AES
Joseph M. Hazlett, 349th LRF
Michael C. Lanning, 749th AMXS
Bryan P. Nalette, 312th AS
Timothy E. Orchard, 349th CS
Eric J. Pena, 349th SFS
Juan R. Perez, 349th SFS
Jason J. Petersen, 349th AMXS
Wayne A. Racuya, 349th CMS
Adan A. Reyes, 749th AMXS
Jonathan R. Robello, 749th AMXS
Christopher E. Santiago, 349th CMS
Ronnie D. Schultz, 312th AS



Senior Airman

Robert L. Castro, Jr., 349th AMDS
Lucannas E. Cronquist, 349th EMS
Elizabeth D. Govan, 45th APS
Alex M. Hernandez, 45th APS
Jubilee A. Johnson, 349th ASTS
Hernandez C. Mendoza, 349th AMXS
Felicia M. Norris, 82nd APS
Carl G. O’Conner, 349th CES
Lewis E. Pain, 349th CES
Christine A. Pulido, 82nd APS
Morgan A. Strong, 349th AES
Steve S. Svay, 55th APS
Tan T. Tran, 749th AMXS



Airman First Class

Danelle C. Glover, 349th MDS
Thomas W. Ishii, 312th AS



Airman

Christalia S. Miller, 82nd APS

Promotions effective July 1, 2006

Wing Spotlight

Name: Senior Master Sgt. Blake C. Cooke
Squadron: 45th Aerial Port Squadron
Years in Reserve: 15 years plus 4 years Active Duty

What is your job in the squadron? Air Freight Superintendent

How does your position affect the overall mission? I am responsible for ensuring that the normal day-to-day operations for each of the air freight's functional areas (Air Terminal Operations Center, Cargo Processing, Passenger Service, Ramp Services, and Special Handling) operate effectively, efficiently, and safely.

What do you like best about the Reserve? The people. Regardless of the Branch of service, Active Duty, Guard, or Reserve - the camaraderie is what I like best.

What is the most interesting/meaningful thing you have done as a reservist? Before I became the squadron's Air Freight Superintendent, I managed the squadron's Air Terminal Operations Center and performed as one of the squadron's certified load planners. In January of 2002 I went to Moron Air Base, Spain, for an Air Expeditionary Forces tasking. In the time I was there, we moved thousands of troops, several thousand short tons of cargo, and had no safety incidents. This was just a few months after September 11th and it was during this time that I saw, first hand, the reason that we train so hard and why we must continue to constantly improve the way we do business and to support the overall mission.

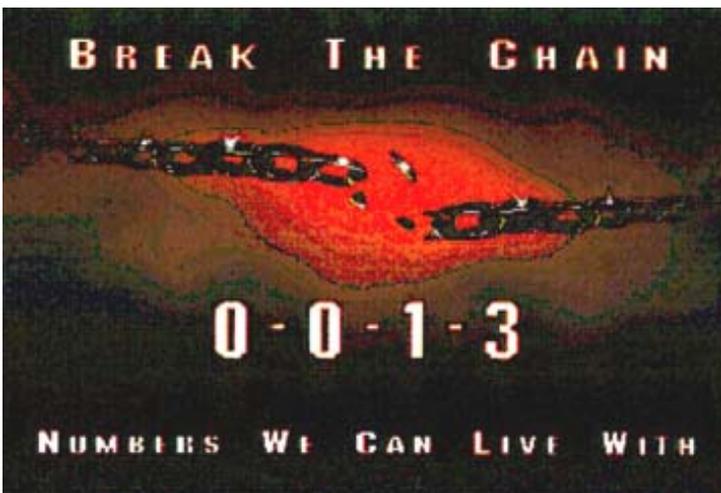


Courtesy photo

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- 0 – DUI/DWI offenses**
- 1 – Drink/hour***
- 3 – Drinks max/sitting***



*Based upon physiological detoxification of a 150 lb. male with no health conditions