

Heartland

# Warrior

Vol. 11, No. 6

June 2006

Serving the men and women of the 434<sup>th</sup> Air Refueling Wing, Grissom ARB, Ind.



Photo by SrA. Mark Orders-Woempner

## Fuel to the fight

Staff Sgt. Anthony Krisher uses the mirrors in the boom pod of a KC-135R Stratotanker to check the air refueling boom before he refuels F-15E Strike Eagles over Iraq recently. Sergeant Krisher is a boom operator with the 340th Expeditionary Air Refueling Squadron. He is deployed from the 434th Air Refueling Wing at Grissom.

## Grissom to gain new commander

Brig. Gen. Dean Despinoy has been selected to replace Brig. Gen. James Melin as the commander of the 434th Air Refueling Wing.

General Melin has been named to command the 452nd Air Mobility Wing at March ARB, Calif.

The moves were announced by Air Force Reserve Command as part of many changes

throughout the command.

General Despinoy is no stranger to Grissom, having served in a variety of positions from 1987-1994.

No official change of command date has been announced.

More information will be released as it becomes available.



General Despinoy

# Speaker's life proves you can make a difference

By Col. Kerry Keithcart  
434<sup>th</sup> ARW vice commander

For those involved in the Human Resources Development Council, we have the opportunity every year to compete for the Joseph McNeil Award.

The award's namesake, Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Joseph McNeil, was our keynote speaker at our annual multi-cultural banquet held during the May unit training assembly.

General McNeil is an inspiration. From his beginnings as a member of the 'Greensboro Four' protesting peacefully at a white's only Woolworth Counter in Greensboro, N.C., to his distinguished career in the Air Force, General McNeil has blended two worlds and taught us not to accept status as a second class citizen.

During his speech, he shared his experience as one of four persistent African-American students, whose actions turned into hundreds of people at hundreds of counters making a peaceful statement. In many ways he was at the genesis of the civil rights movement.

Now as we celebrate the diversity that General McNeil sought for all of us, we embrace the strengths that each of us bring together. We now know the more diversity we have, the more strength we have, and the more synergy and opportunity we have as well.

As the general spoke about his transition from college to being in the military and serving as a traditional



Photo by SrA. Chris Bolen

**Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Joseph McNeil, left, is presented a token of appreciation for his participation in Grissom's annual multi-cultural banquet, from Brig. Gen. James Melin, 434th Air Refueling Wing commander.**

Reservist, he spoke that he once again was treated as a second class citizen. But through his leadership, he was able to help Reservists obtain military identification cards and commissary privileges.

As the Global War on Terrorism has demonstrated, we all bring something to the fight.

General McNeil's perseverance was fueled by the sense of hope that he was right, and could make a difference that would benefit everyone.

He continues to recognize that challenges still are ahead of us. We continue to work on a healthy work environment by embracing diversity and equal opportunity for all. Those are key principles of our HRDC.

We can learn a lot from the lessons

learned by the Greensboro Four. As members of this great wing we should constantly remind each other of the value of diversity and the capabilities that each of us possess and bring to the table.

Take time to thank those around you for their service, their sacrifice and their commitment to the 434<sup>th</sup> Air Refueling Wing. Treat everyone as a first class citizen and accept no less from anyone else.

When people look back at our place in history, let them see that we've learned the lessons taught us by General McNeil and those who came before us; and that we've taken that lesson and nurtured and progressed it for the betterment of those who now follow us. Through the celebration of diversity, we can do just that.

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Vol. 11, No.6  
June 2006

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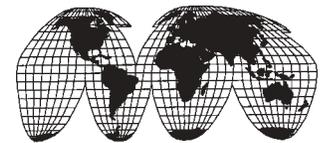
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The editorial content is edited, and prepared by the Public Affairs Office of the 434<sup>th</sup> Air Refueling Wing, Grissom ARB, IN, 46971-5000.

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# Grissom says farewell to last of the 'Bakalar Boys'

By SrA. Roberto Modelo  
Public Affairs Staff

A lot happens from when you're "The Kid" to when you're 'The Old Man.' Just ask Master Sgt. Roger Redmon. Sergeant Redmon, a KC-135 crew chief with the 434<sup>th</sup> Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, is retiring after 40 years of maintaining aircraft for various designations of the 434<sup>th</sup>.

From operations in Vietnam, to current day Enduring Freedom missions, Sergeant Redmon has done it. Whether the mission was troop carrying, special operations, or air refueling – he's done that too.

With 40 years in the military he has seen many changes in the service as well as with the 434<sup>th</sup>.

Like a lot of kids growing up, he was fascinated with airplanes. He lived near Bakalar Air Force Base, Ind., the original home of the 434<sup>th</sup> ARW, near Columbus, Ind., and was interested in airplanes. So he joined the Air Explorers group at the local Boy Scouts.

"I've always been impressed with airplanes," he said. "I don't care who you are or how old you are, they are impressive."

After graduating from high school, just a few miles down the road, he decided that he would join the Air Force Reserves at Bakalar. He figured he would join as an aircraft mechanic to pursue the specialty.

"I liked the idea of being in the reserves and still being home and farming and doing what I wanted to do," said Sergeant Redmon.

"Aircraft maintenance to me is where it's at," he added. "My whole goal was to work on the airplanes."

As luck would have it, an air reserve technician position for an aircraft mechanic came open at Bakalar just as soon as he returned from training, allowing him to serve with the 434<sup>th</sup> full time.

His first assignment was working in the phase dock on the C-119 "Flying Boxcars."

"I was originally working at the phase doc with the 119s so that I could work my way out to the flightline and



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Doug Hays

## Master Sgt. Roger Redmon

become a flight engineer," he said.

At 22, during the beginning of 1970, he found out that the 434<sup>th</sup> was moving its home station from Bakalar to the newly named Grissom Air Force Base, Ind., about 120 miles upstate.

He is the last member at Grissom to have served at Bakalar.

Upon arrival at Grissom he ended up working on new aircraft including the 0-2 Cessna, and then later on working on the F/A-37 "Talon," which would later be replaced by the A-10 "Thunderbolt."

Time passed and the 434<sup>th</sup> took on different missions. Going from the 434<sup>th</sup> Tactical Airlift Wing, to the 434<sup>th</sup> Special Operations Wing, the 434<sup>th</sup> Tactical Fighter Wing, and subsequently the 434 Air Refueling Wing.

During the times of change Master Sgt. Redmon kept on top of his mission no matter what aircraft came through

the hangar doors.

Even as operation tempo picked up during Operation Desert Storm, he flew wherever the mission called for, just as he did during his last few years in the military, serving in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

"In '01, '02, and '03 we were pretty busy," he said.

Although, he was set to retire in 2006, Master Sgt. Redmon's tempo did not subside just as the tempo around him did not.

"It is kind of hard for me to understand retiring when you can still physically do your job," he said. "But now I'm ready."

"The whole time I was at Bakalar they called me the kid," he jokingly added. "Now they call me the old man even though I don't feel that way."

"It is an end of an era," he said. "I think it is more of an honor to be able to stay as long as I did."

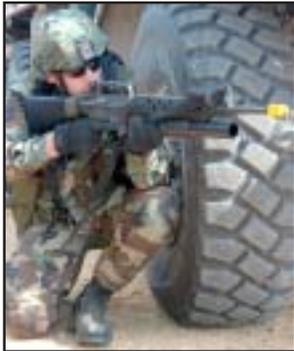
# Security Forces fire teams deploy to C

By SrA. Jonathan Jones  
Public Affairs staff

Intense; preparation. These two words summarize the training that 13 members of the 434<sup>th</sup> Security Forces Squadron recently received while attending the Patriot Defender course at Camp Swift, Texas

The course is a 12 day Air Force Reserve Command exercise for security forces that is required every three years. In addition, this year the AFRC has included chaplains in the training where they receive ground combat skills training and chaplain service specific training, while providing “real world” spiritual guidance to the students.

“This is basically training for ground combat,” said Tech. Sgt. Scott Yaden, team leader and member of the 434<sup>th</sup> Security Forces Squadron.



Senior Airman Jacob Koch, 434<sup>th</sup> SFS, takes up a defensive position during a convoy operations training exercise.

The 434<sup>th</sup> SFS was part of the alpha flight, which was made up of four other security forces squadrons from Colorado, Ohio, and Texas.

In addition, the flight was made up of flight leaders, first sergeants, squad leaders, and fire team leaders that took classes which emphasized leadership skills, so they can effectively lead troops when deployed, Sergeant Yaden said.

Broken down into three phases, the training consisted of various exercises testing map and compass, land navigation, night vision, confidence course, patrolling, convoy operations, and military operations in urban terrain — a 22 hour field training exercise, clearing and defending an area.

The final training exercise lasted 60 hours. The students demonstrated the skills learned during phases one and two by defending a sector, conducting



Staff Sgt. Kent Taylor, 434<sup>th</sup> Security Forces Squadron, checks the equipment of a soldier during an infiltration into a secure area.

Senior Airmen Daniel Rosa, left, and Douglas Hattabaugh, plot points on a map to find locations during a map and compass class as part of a land navigation exercise.



Senior Airman Sarah Walton, 434<sup>th</sup> SFS, assembles a rifle following a live fire exercise.

Heartland Warrior

# Camp Swift Texas for Patriot Defender



the functionality of an infra red sensor used to detect enemy

patrol operations, and convoy operations.

“The techniques learned here are lessons learned over there [Iraq],” said Tech. Sgt. George Sartor, an instructor with the 610<sup>th</sup> SFS Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base, Texas.

These lessons are applied to the course, so that younger airmen will have the skills when deployed, added Staff Sgt. Michael McCovery, an instructor with the 610<sup>th</sup> SFS.

“The most exciting part [the training] is being here with the troops; just having fun with them. We have a lot of younger Airmen, and helping them learn is the best part,” said Tech. Sgt. David Rooke, fire team leader and member of the 434<sup>th</sup> SFS.

Tech. Sgt. David Douglass, fire team leader and member of the 434<sup>th</sup> SFS, was proud of his team’s performance after completing

the land navigation exercise. His team included 434<sup>th</sup> SFS members Senior Airman Patrick Barringer, Senior Airman William Wright, and Staff. Sgt. Shenika Poindexter.

“My favorite part [the training] so far was the confidence course,” Sergeant Poindexter said, while Airman Wright preferred firing the M-4 rifle.



**SrA. Charles Marrillia, 434th SFS, checks the operability of a field communications module.**

During the convoy operations class, the younger airmen were encouraged to construct their own convoy.

While junior and senior non-commissioned

officers may have more experience in convoy operations, having the younger airmen step up and provide their ideas allows for change that improves the overall quality of the security force’s operations Air Force wide, said Staff Sgt. Larry Sanchez, an instructor and member of the 610<sup>th</sup> SFS.

For the 13 Grissom members, the preparation was indeed intense.

**Grissom security forces members travel in a staggered formation during a convoy training exercise at Camp Swift, Texas.**



Photos by SrA. Jonathan Jones  
cleans an M-4 rifle after cleaning the weapon





Photo by Tech. Sgt. Doug Hays

### Field trip training

Tech. Sgt. David Douglass, 434th Security Forces Squadron, helps Robin Stiers, 12, try on a gas mask during a National Police Week event held at Grissom May 15. Grissom hosted the observance and law enforcement agencies from the local, state and federal level interacted with children from local elementary and middle schools. Robin is the daughter of Master Sgts. Randy Stiers, 434th Communications Flight, and Master Sgt. Kathie Stiers, 434th SFS.

### UTA items

**Lodging** is open 24 hours a day during the primary unit training assembly and from 6 a.m. - 10 p.m. on alternate UTAs.

**The fitness center** is open from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m.

**The dining facility** troop feeding hours on Saturday are 6-7:15 a.m. for breakfast; 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. for lunch (12:30 p.m. on the alternate); and 4:30 -5:30 p.m. for dinner.

On Sunday the hours are 5:45-6:45 a.m. for breakfast, and 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. for lunch (12:30 p.m. on alternate).

Box dinners for the Sunday evening meal must be ordered by the Sunday breakfast, and must be picked up by 4:30 p.m. on Sunday.

**The 434th Aerospace Medical Squadron's immunization clinic** is open on Saturday from 8:30 - 11:30 a.m. and 1-3:30 p.m.

**434th Security Forces Squadron Pass and ID** is open from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday of the primary UTA.

**Upcoming UTAs:** Primary UTAs include June 3-4; and July 15-16.

Alternate UTAs are June 24-25; and July 22-23.

**Worship services** are held in Bldg. 596, Room 116.

During primary unit training assemblies, Protestant services are Sunday at 11 a.m. with Catholic worship services at 12:15 p.m.

### Dodge ball

The 434th Services Flight is sponsoring a double elimination dodge ball tournament at 5:30 p.m. June 3 at the fitness center.

Six player teams will compete in the event.

For more information, or to register, contact Bruce Cannady at the fitness center at Ext. 2000.

### Block party

The 434th Services Flight is holding the second annual block party from 6-10 p.m. June 3 at Bldg. 440.

Music, food and drinks will be



Photo by SrA. Robert Modelo

## Daddy's home!

Senior Master Sgt. Russell Voils, 434th Security Forces Squadron is welcomed home by his children, Adam, Allison, white shirt, and Emily, following his return from a deployment to Iraq. Sergeant Voils was one of six members of the 434th SFS that deployed to Iraq for a six-month tour.

available, and Club members, and those who join eat for free! All other members pay \$5.

For more information, Ext. 2414.

## Patches

Reservists assigned to the Air Force Reserve Command units will now wear an AFRC patch on their battle dress uniforms.

Previously most Grissom members wore an Air Mobility Command patch

on the right breast pocket.

The change is effective immediately and mandatory by Oct. 1, 2006.

Those members assigned to Grissom on Active Guard or Reserve tours or AGR positions, will continue to wear the patch of their gaining command.

Patches have been ordered and unit orderly rooms will begin distributing the patches soon.

For more information, contact your unit orderly room or unit clothing monitor.

## Hometown news

The Public Affairs office has a program that lets Airmen share their achievements with family and friends no matter where they may live.

Through the Hometown News Release Program PA can draft a news release and send to any newspaper in the country that allows military members to share their achievements.

To learn more contact your unit public affairs representative, or call PA at Ext. 3348.

## In the limelight

### Medals

**Meritorious Service Medal**— Staff Sgt. Brian Mendenhall, 434th Logistics Readiness Squadron; and Master Sgt. Keith Turnipseed, 434th Mission Support Flight.

**Air Force Commendation Medal**— Master Sgt. Gary Hawk, 434th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron; and Tech. Sgt. Larry Hammer, 434th AMXS.

### Promotions

**To master sergeant**— Ruth Fair, 434th Military Operations Flight; Carol Till, 434th Air Refueling Wing; Gregory Meyer, 434th CES; Karyn Lloyd, 434th MPF; Shawn Sandridge, and 434th AMDS; David Shaffer, 434th Maintenance Group.

**To technical sergeant** — Joseph Swisher, 434th OSS; George McGookin, 434th CES; Luke Scott,

434th CES; Steven Kulik, 434th AMDS; and Richard Hatmacher, 434th LRS.

**To staff sergeant**— Kristen Kaminski, 434th Communications Squadron; Michal Bednarczyk, 434th CES; Justin Coe, 434th Security Forces Squadron; Douglas Hattabaugh, 434th SFS; Benjiman Durr; 434th SFS; Rachel Rodeghero, 434th AMDS; Terry Truex, 434th SFS; and Michael Darnell, 434th LRS.

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# Grissom Airman earns Trooper's badge

By SrA. Jonathan Jones  
Public Affairs staff

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It's like basic training all over again. The banging of cans, the screaming and yelling, rushed schedules, blowing whistles, pushups, shining shoes, physical training...only this time it lasts for 23 weeks.

Senior Airman Vicki Cummings recently completed the Indiana Law Enforcement Academy in Plainfield, Ind. She attended the academy for 23 weeks, graduating on Apr. 7, 2006 to become an Indiana State Police officer.

Airman Cummings, an information manager with the 72<sup>nd</sup> Air Refueling Squadron, was the only female in her graduating class of 36.

"Being the only female was tough. The only females I saw were the cleaning people," she added.

In addition, she feels that her instructors did a good job by not treating her different, but like everybody else. This became apparent during her defensive tactics or DTs training. Because of her smaller stature, it was difficult to physically overcome the larger size of the men, she said.

"DTs I dreaded everyday. I mean you were getting the crap beat out of you for weeks because in order to learn how to do the certain moves you need to do you had to practice on your fellow classmates."

In addition to DTs training, she



*Courtesy photo*

**Tech. Sgt. Jerry Cummings pins on a state trooper's badge onto his wife Senior Airman, and new Indiana State Police Trooper, Vicki Cummings.**

received training in emergency vehicle operations, emergency medical service awareness, firearms, vehicle crash investigations, criminal investigation, dealing with domestic violence and sexual assault, and physical training.

Airman Cummings believes her military training assisted her while attending the ILEA.

"Anything I did in basic military training, I did there [at the academy]," said the Airman.

In addition, she could not help other classmates with room inspections because women and men did not share rooms, nor could she go into their rooms.

An important advantage she had was her ability to maintain military bearing at all times. Some recruits would talk in formation or move while at attention and cause the entire class

to be on "their faces," she said.

"I knew when to shut my mouth," Airman Cummings added.

Although she had an advantage, she often struggled with keeping her spirits up because the 23 weeks of training seemed so long. This showed every weekend when she went home, she said.

Unlike BMT, trainees are allowed to go home to be with their families every weekend. However, Sunday would come quickly and it would be time to go back to the academy, leaving behind her husband Tech. Sgt. Jerry Cummings, a crew chief with the 434<sup>th</sup> Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, and three children.

"It was very hard to leave," she said.

Although Airman Cummings experienced her struggles while at the academy and leaving home every weekend, she was reminded of why she was there during her 12<sup>th</sup> week of training when all of the cadets were allowed to go home for one week and would be going on ride-a-longs with Indiana State Police officers.

These ride-a-longs reminded the cadets of why they had gone through the training up to this point and kept their interest, said Airman Cummings.

"I absolutely love the law, but I don't want to be in an office loving the law; I want to be on the street loving the law," she added.

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