

Heartland WARRIOR

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Any questions regarding any content should be directed to the editor at (765) 688-3348.

Staff

Col. Doug Schwartz.....commander
Douglas Hays.....deputy chief
Tech. Sgt. Benjamin Mota.....editor
Staff Sgt. Jami Lancette.....staff writer
Staff Sgt. Katrina Heikkinen.....staff writer
Senior Airman Andrew Crawford.....staff writer
Senior Airman Dakota Bergl.....staffwriter

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U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Jami Lancette

On the cover...

Chad Barton, 434th Communications Squadron, attempts to wrap a pass around Thomas Prado, 434th Civil Engineer Squadron, during first round action of Grissom's annual basketball tournament. The Engineers were buried by the Communicators 29-32 and fell into the loser's bracket of the double elimination tournament.

434th ARW pilots new cyber security program

By Tech. Sgt. Benjamin Mota
Public Affairs staff

For decades, Grissom has been vital to the Air Force's global reach, but more recently Grissom became another valuable battlefield asset.

Lt. Gen. Bill Bender, Air Force chief of information dominance and chief information officer, visited Grissom Jan. 13-14 to discuss the future of cyber security and meet the Airmen who are helping shape its future through a new pilot program.

"We have a number of cyber security prototype initiatives taking place, and the 434th Air Refueling Wing has been selected as one of those pathfinders," said Bender "I wanted to come out very early on and meet the individuals in charge of those programs."

The 434th ARW was selected as one of two lead pilot squadrons in the Air Force Reserve Command to transition into a next generation com-

munications squadron.

"The pilot program incorporates a new mission set that takes a proactive approach towards cyber security," said Capt. Dustin Schimp, 434th Communications Squadron director of operations who is spearheading the prototype. "Currently, our main goal is to ensure patches are up-to-date and computers are functioning properly, but through this pilot program we will expand the domain of what we defend into other areas that directly impact flight operations."

Areas that might be incorporated into their domain include weather systems, aircraft communications, and other electronic systems that have a direct impact to the refueling mission of the Hoosier Wing.

"Any area that's a vital part of sustaining our refueling mission is something that has to be protected," said Maj. Denney Neace, 434th CS

See 'Cyber security' page 10



U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Benjamin Mota

Lt. Gen. Bill Bender, Air Force chief of information dominance and chief information officer, operates the flight simulator during a tour of Grissom Jan. 14.

Grissom Airmen return from deployment

By Tech. Sgt. Benjamin Mota
Public Affairs staff

Welcomed back by family and friends, 68 Airmen on two 434th Air Refueling Wing KC-135R Stratotankers returned to Grissom Feb. 07 after a four-month deployment to Southwest Asia.

"We are very proud our returning Airmen," said Col. Anna Schulte, 434th Maintenance Group commander. "They did an outstanding job during the deployment, and that is a true testament of their professionalism and dedication to the mission."

The families were hosted by the Grissom Airman and Family Readiness center where they decorated signs and socialized as they waited for their loved ones to return.

"Just in time to be my Valentine," read a sign

held by Katherine Fruit who waited for Senior Airman Brian Snead, 434th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron crew chief, to return. "It's been too long, and all of us are ready for him to come home."

The group of returning Airmen also included an additional six aircrew who returned from a 60-day deployment. Together they provided aerial refueling and aircraft maintenance in support of Operation Inherent Resolve.

"During the deployment we generated 885 sorties, more than 4,700 flying hours, offloaded 45.5 million pounds of fuel and supported 4,300 coalition receivers," said Chief Master Sgt. Chad Weisend, 434th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron superintendent. "Our Airmen did a great job and morale was good throughout the deployment."



U.S. Air Force photos by Tech. Sgt. Benjamin Mota

Staff Sgt. Patrick Marchman, 434th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron integrated avionics specialist, embraces his children, Kellen and Caden, after returning to Grissom Feb. 7.



Col. Doug Schwartz, 434th Air Refueling Wing commander, greets Senior Airman David O'Donnell, 434th Maintenance Squadron aircraft electrician specialist, after returning to Grissom Air Reserve Base from a deployment to Southwest Asia Feb. 7

Garvelink assumes command of 434th SFS

By Tech. Sgt. Benjamin Mota
Public Affairs staff

For centuries, assumption of command ceremonies have allowed members the opportunity to witness the symbolic passing of the torch in the presence of friends, family members and fellow Airmen.

Keeping up with military tradition Maj. Matthew Garvelink assumed command of the 434th Security Forces Squadron during a ceremony here Feb. 6.

"I've heard nothing but good things about this unit, and I love the Midwest," said Garvelink. "I've been stationed all over the world, and I'm excited to be the commander at a base that's just two and a half hours from where I grew up!"

The Michigan native came to Grissom approximately six months ago as the 434th SFS operations officer before being selected for his new role.

"He has only been here a short time, but he came to us with a lot of experience and has really impressed us with his leadership and dedication to the mission," said Col. Scott Russell, 434th Mission Support Group commander, who presided over the ceremony. "He is a phenomenal leader and hit the ground running from day one."

That work ethic and commitment to the mission was echoed as Garvelink discussed future plans for the 434th SFS.

"I really want to see this squad-



U.S. Air Force photos by Tech. Sgt. Benjamin Mota

Maj. Matthew Garvelink, 434th Security Forces Squadron commander, receives the 434th SFS guidon from Col. Scott Russell, 434th Mission Support Group commander, during an assumption of command ceremony at Grissom Feb. 6.

ron grow as a team," explained Garvelink. "The unit has a lot of really smart people doing a really good job but we can always do better."

The 434th SFS consists of Active Guard Reserve, traditional reservists, civilians and Air Force reserve technicians that work together to accomplish the mission.

"I want to remove any conscious or unconscious separation between civilians, ARTs, reservists and AGRs because we are all the same

team," he said. "Teams win, individuals loose."

Garvelink left the regular Air Force in April 2015; he previously commanded the 435th Security Forces Squadron at Pulaski Barracks, Sembach and Baumholder Kaserne, Germany.

He holds a Bachelor's of Science degree in criminal justice from Grand Valley State University, Allendale, Michigan and a Bachelor's of Science degree in Biology from Hope College, Holland, Michigan.



Airmen from the 434th Security Forces Squadron stand in formation during an assumption of command ceremony at Grissom Feb. 6. During the ceremony Maj. Matthew Garvelink assumed command of the squadron in front of friends and family.

25th Anniversary of Desert Storm: Hear their story

By Douglas Hays
Public Affairs staff

Jan. 14, 2016 marked the 25th Anniversary of Desert Storm and Airmen from Grissom were there to fuel the fight.

Operating out of Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, members of the 434th Air Refueling Wing joined coalition forces to launch a crippling air campaign against Iraqi forces who invaded Kuwait.

In all, nearly one out of every seven Air Force Reservists was on active duty during that time according to Air Force Reserve officials.

At Grissom, personnel assigned to the 72nd Air Refueling Squadron, 434th Consolidated Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, 434th Headquarters Squadron, 434th Security Forces flight, 434th Clinic members and others.

"When the air campaign kicked off literally everything on the ground launched, and that was sustained for about three weeks straight," said Chief Master Sgt. Tony Hoffman, 434th Maintenance Group superintendent, and a staff sergeant crew chief at the time.

"We literally had planes in line, with engines running, waiting to come into parking spots for fuel and maintenance," he said. "As fast as you could turn the aircraft you had aircrew ready to take off and go back up. I'll never forget that continuous sustained surge. It took a while to get used to the tempo, eventually it became a daily 12-hour routine."

"The amount of sor-



Airmen from the 434th Air Refueling Wing pose next to a KC-135 Stratotanker at Mildenhall Air Force Base, United Kingdom. From the left is Sean Mahoney, Rich Miller, Randy Henderson, Chris Scher, Rusty Owen, and Mark Cole.

ties flown by the tankers and the B-52s, is what Senior Master Sgt. Tim O'Brien, 434th Logistics Readiness Squadron superintendent of plans and integration said he remembers most. I had been on some very busy Air Force bases prior [to that], but never saw that many aircraft flying that many sorties in one location."

As a staff sergeant at the time and an aircraft ground equipment mechanic O'Brien said he recalls the heat and humidity.

"I had never been to a place that was that hot and humid," O'Brien said. "As soon as the cargo door opened, I instantly started sweating. We actually had to wear gloves to touch the AGE equipment because it was

so hot."

Senior Master Sgt. Darin Schenher, 434th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron production superintendent, was a crew chief and a technical sergeant at the time. He was also deployed to Jeddah during the initial invasion.

One of Schenher's most vivid memories was a Grissom KC-135E aircraft, 58-0013, that lost two engines, and the aircrew was still able to land with no loss of life.

Shortly after takeoff crew encountered jet wash, a kind of turbulence that builds behind large aircraft. The unexpected jet wash pitched them so violently from side-to-side, that somewhere in the process, both engines on the left side of the tanker were torn free,

leaving the fully loaded tanker with very serious control problems.

Then staff sergeants, Rich Miller and Rusty Owens both recovered 58-0013 from an earlier mission and pumped on fuel before crew members came out to taxi for launch.

"When I got back to the compound I took the phone call that two engines had departed the aircraft," said Miller who is now a senior master sergeant with the 434th AMXS.

The entire crew was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for their skill in safely landing the aircraft.

"They tried to duplicate the feat in the simulator and crashed every time,"

See 'Desert Storm' p. 10

Airmen volunteer in local community

By Senior Airman Andrew Crawford
Public Affairs staff

Most Airmen join the military to serve their country, but that desire to serve often overflows into the community, and a group of Airmen recently demonstrated just that.

Airmen from the 434th Air Refueling Wing showed up and dedicated their time and service to paint the third floor at the Terrace Towers, an apartment complex containing 105 one-bedroom apartments for senior citizens and physically challenged individuals, in downtown Kokomo, Ind., Jan. 9.

"This project is a good example of the selfless service we see from our Airmen at Grissom on a daily basis," said Chief Master Sgt. Robert Herman, 434th ARW command chief. "A lot of our Airman at the event yesterday didn't live in

that community, but they showed up and helped people they didn't know because it was the right thing to do; that says a lot about the men and women who serve at Grissom!"

Events such as these help enrich the community with Air Force core values and demonstrate the bond between the base and the surrounding communities.

"It was heartwarming to see the residents of the Terrace Towers come out of their rooms and compliment us on how much better we are making it look," said Staff Sgt. Jami Lancette, 434th ARW public affairs specialist.

During volunteer events, Airmen from the base are able to give back to the community that supports them and interact with people outside of Grissom.

"The great thing about our Airmen is they have



U.S. Air Force photos by Staff Sgt. Jami Lancette

Senior Airman Frederick Beck, 434th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron aerospace propulsion specialist, and Staff Sgt. Zachariah Smock, 434th Maintenance Squadron supply management specialist, paint a wall at the Terrace Towers in downtown Kokomo, Ind., Jan. 9.

a sense of service to our nation, and that same service was shown to the less fortunate people that these Airmen were helping," said Herman. "Being a good Airman is not only about doing what is required; it's also just as important that we give back by helping others

who are less fortunate and helping the community around us become stronger."

2nd Lt. Erica Morgan, 434th ARW executive officer and event coordinator, echoed Herman's sentiment towards giving back to the community.

"Events like this give our Airmen, myself included, a sense of pride for giving back to people in need that live around the base, and you can see the positive responses in people's faces," explained Morgan. "The project at Terrace Towers is a continuous project, and we will be volunteering and helping the residents there again soon."

Later in the project, a mural dedicated to all branches of military will be painted to show support.

If interested in volunteering for community events contact Morgan at 765-688-4931.



Master Sgt. Jose Gomez, 434th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron crew chief, adds touch up paint during a volunteer event at the Terrace Towers in downtown Kokomo, Ind., Jan. 9.

4-ship takes off with help from 434th AMXS

By Tech. Sgt. Benjamin Mota
Public Affairs staff

It's a lot more than pulling chocks, snapping a salute and watching four aircraft fly into the horizon.

After hours of preparation and days of planning, a four-ship formation of KC-135 Stratotankers from the 434th Air Refueling Wing took off from Grissom Air Reserve Base, Ind., March 5.

"The purpose of formation flights is to maximize the number of tankers within limited airspace and to ensure we can provide plenty of fuel for our receiving aircraft," explained Maj. Daniel Keeney, 434th Operations Support Squadron nuclear plans officer, who was also a pilot on one of the aircraft in the formation. "In certain circumstances the flights also enable our aircraft to get airborne quickly in case of a threat."

During the formation, aircraft departed within 30 seconds of each other, and while many may have seen the departure very few know what goes on behind the scenes to make that happen.

"This exercise really was a team effort," said Senior Master Sgt. Darin Schenher, 434th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron production superintendent. "Fuel has to be loaded a day prior, aircraft are required to have valid pre-flights, and the aircraft have to be ready."

Even if everything goes as planned weather can



U.S. Air Force photos by Tech. Sgt. Benjamin Mota

Three 434th Air Refueling Wing KC-135R Stratotankers from a four-ship formation taxi to the runway prior to a flight from Grissom March 5.

prevent us from flying."

The 434th AMXS is responsible for the daily launch and recovery of aircraft, providing organizational level maintenance, and rendering support for cross-country and global missions as needed.

"Maintenance deserves most of the credit for getting all four aircraft in the air," said Keeney. "The lead aircraft had a minor issue during pre-flight but our maintenance was able to quickly fix it."

After all of the planning and preparation it only takes one piece of the puzzle to bring the formation to a halt, and that was almost the case had it not been for Grissom's maintainers.

"During pre-flight inspection we had a minor issue with [a part of the aircraft that is mandatory for flight], explained Schenher. "Rather than going through the supply process,

we were able to authorize the transfer of the part from one of our grounded aircraft, saving us a lot of time.

"We haven't conducted a four-aircraft formation in a long time, and had we not fixed the aircraft in a timely manner the formation would have not occurred as it did," he added.

In addition to maintenance successfully preparing the aircraft for launch, the aircrew did what needed to be done to get them off the runway.

"Our crew did great; not a single radio call was missed the whole flight," said Keeney. We have three radios that have to be monitored, and when you have four aircraft running checklists at the same time, the potential for someone missing a call or something getting lost on a frequency-change is very high."



Above: A 434th Air Refueling Wing KC-135R Stratotanker takes off from Grissom March 5.

Helping units work smarter not harder

By Tech. Sgt. Benjamin Mota
Public Affairs staff

One Grissom officer is working hard at helping others work smart while leading the charge of innovation.

Lt. Col. Patricia Latham, 434th Air Refueling Wing process manager, is responsible for overseeing effective process improvement in an effort to ensure processes here are efficient, cost saving and compliant with Air Force instructions.

"There's no such thing as a perfect process, there's always room for improvement," said Latham. "We have to start with changing our culture and the way we think.

"Part of what I do as process manager is take issues that arise and help validate what the true problem is through a systematic approach called Continuous Process Improvement," said Latham.

CPI is a term used by the Air Force to describe the on-going effort to make processes more efficient.

"In a nutshell it's about working smarter and not harder," said Col. Doug Schwartz, 434th ARW commander.

The implementation of CPI re-

quires oversight and support from leadership, and Grissom's commander is taking a proactive approach.

"CPI is here to stay," said Schwartz. "We owe it to the tax payers to be good stewards of their money, and we also owe it to Airmen who use those processes every day.

"Eliminating waste and identifying the value-added activities not only saves tax payers money, it also saves everyone time," he added. "That time saved can then be spent more productively and that's a win-win for everyone."

Not only does it affect everyone, process improvement also requires support from everyone, said Latham.

"For most of us, this concept is very different from the military culture we are accustomed to," said Latham. "We are used to following the directions from our leadership; it's not the norm for us to ask why or give an opinion of how something can be done better.

"Process improvement gives all Airmen the opportunity to be problem solvers," she added.

Airmen are encouraged to take improvement issues to their supervi-

sors first who can then bring them to Latham if further assistance is required.

"The severity and complexity of a problem often determines what route best works to resolve an issue," said Latham. "After a process is identified I will assist in gathering facts, and those facts will help us determine how to proceed."

As a facilitator, Latham has the subject matter expertise to determine what CPI tools would best suit each situation.

"AFCPI draws upon various CPI methodologies and tools," she explained. "The tools help us systematically work through the process improvement."

In addition, Latham accesses the CPI portal, an online CPI resource that allows her to see other completed process improvement activities throughout the Air Force.

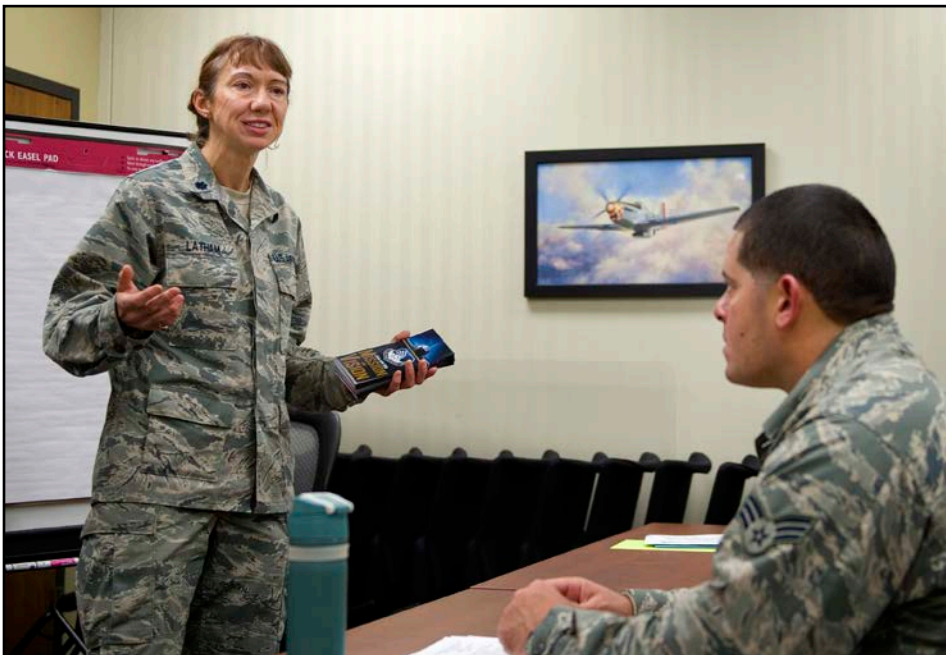
"The value of the CPI portal is that we can search the database to look for similar problems that have already been solved," said Latham. "This way we don't have to reinvent the wheel and others can also learn from our efforts."

To ensure Grissom is ahead of the game the commander requires all Grissom Airmen and civilians to take CPI awareness training.

"My goal is to ensure each member has the basic understanding of CPI resources and benefits we can provide throughout the Hoosier Wing," said Schwartz. "It's emphasized from the first day Airmen arrive at Grissom during newcomers orientation and continues into their work areas."

"In addition to being a valuable asset at Grissom, the training provides tools that can be used in each individual's every-day lives; there's always room for improvement," Latham concluded.

The awareness training will be provided during the week for civilians and Air Force Reserve Technicians and on the unit training assemblies for traditional reservists. For more information on CPI contact Latham at (765) 688-2290.



U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Benjamin Mota

Lt. Col. Patricia Latham, 434th Air Refueling Wing process manager, speaks about the 434th ARW mission and vision during a orientation at Grissom Jan. 10.

Cheeks assumes command of 434th FSS

By Tech. Sgt.
Benjamin Mota
Public Affairs staff

Keeping up with military tradition Lt. Col. Barbara Cheeks assumed command of the 434th Force Support Squadron during a ceremony here March 5.

"I'm honored to be your new commander," said Cheeks. "The 434th [Air Refueling Wing] has a long and distinguished history of excellence, and I'm very proud to be part of it."

The Kansas native came to Grissom after serving as the Air National Guard Liaison to the Total Force Service Center at Joint Base San Antonio Randolph, Texas.

"Lt. Col. Cheeks is an experienced personnelist who has been at various levels of command from the unit level all the way up to the National Guard Bureau," said Col. Scott Russell, 434th Mission Support Group commander, who presided over the ceremony. "In my conversations with her, she has shown to be very dedicated to getting the mission done while she takes care of her people; that's exactly what we needed for the 434th

FSS at this time!"

Getting the mission done and taking care of her people was a priority that Cheeks emphasized throughout the ceremony.

"We have to ensure we are getting our training requirements completed, meeting physical fitness standards and maintaining our deployment readiness," said Cheeks. "At the same time we have to ensure our mission of providing personnel and services support for the wing is taken care of."

"The number of personnel in this career field has been reduced largely in part due to automated systems such as the Total Force Service Center," explained Cheeks. "I want to ensure that everyone in the wing has the best knowledge of those systems and that members can receive the same or improved support in the future."

Cheeks, who also has 15 years of prior enlisted service, said she has high expectations of her Airmen.

"I expect my Airmen to know their jobs, provide good customer service and treat each other with respect," she said. "I really



U.S. Air Force photos by Tech. Sgt. Benjamin Mota

Lt. Col. Barbara Cheeks, 434th Force Support Squadron commander, receives the 434th FSS guidon from Col. Scott Russell, 434th Mission Support Group commander, during an assumption of command ceremony at Grissom March 5.

like being hands on and I can relate to the enlisted force because I used to be enlisted."

Cheeks holds a Master's degree in public adminis-

tration from Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville, Illinois and a Bachelor's of Science degree from Northeastern Illinois University, Chicago.



434th Force Support Squadron Airmen pose for a photo following an assumption of command ceremony at Grissom March 5.

ATM installed at Grissom Exchange

By Doug Hays
Public Affairs staff

With a card, PIN and money in their accounts, Team Grissom members now have access to money at their fingertips with the installation of a new automatic teller machine at the Grissom Exchange.

Col. Doug Schwartz was joined by Airmen, community leaders and bankers for a ribbon cutting ceremony for Grissom's new ATM March 25.

"We've been working hard for a long time to get this ATM installed for our members," Schwartz said. "We did our homework, dotted all the i's and crossed all the



U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Benjamin Mota

Col. Doug Schwartz, 434th Air Refueling Wing commander, cuts the ribbon on a new automatic teller machine March 25, at the Grissom Exchange.

t's to make it convenient for Team Grissom to have access to their hard-earned money."

Grissom placed ads in local newspapers to

solicit bids for the ATM placement. Each bid was reviewed before the base chose to go with the financial institution that offered the most support.

Employees have access to the ATM any time the exchange is open during the week and on unit training assembly weekends.

Cyber Security, from page 2

commander. "Right now we are identifying those vulnerabilities and creating a plan to protect those assets.

"After they have been identified, we will then determine what additional resources such as manpower and equipment are needed to meet the cyber security initiatives," he explained.

During his visit, Bender echoed the importance of cyber security and lauded Grissom for leading the way.

"It's been a great opportunity to see the people at Grissom who are going to build our Air Force of the future to ensure we are protected from cyber security concerns," explained Bender. "We have to start viewing cyber security from a proactive approach rather than reactive."

Bender used the 2015 Office of Personnel Management breach as an example of how reactive measures can cost a significant amount more than proactive measures.

"The recent OPM breach has already cost the government millions of dollars and cost the enemy



U.S. Air Force photos by Tech. Sgt. Benjamin Mota

Lt. Gen. Bill Bender, Air Force chief of information dominance and chief information officer, shakes hands with Senior Airman Caroline Taylor, 434th Aircraft Maintenance crew chief, and other Airmen during a visit to Grissom Jan. 14.

nothing," said Bender. "We have to continue protecting the information technology we've been protecting for the last 20 years, but more importantly we need to take a proactive approach to identify other percentage of vulnerabilities our enemies can take advantage of."

During the visit, Bender also had an opportunity to tour one of Grissom's 16 KC-135R Stratotankers and

operate the KC-135R simulator, but credited the people here as the base's best asset.

"My impression of Grissom is that you are all such a proud team; proud of your mission, proud of each other, willing to help each other, and that's the definition of teamwork," he said. "It makes a big difference when you have so many people fully committed to the mission like you do here."

Hoosier Wing honors 2015 annual award winners

**By Senior Airman
Andrew Crawford**
Public Affairs staff

Each year, time is set aside to honor Grissom Airmen who embody the Air Force's core values to the fullest extent through their actions and commitment to duty.

The 434th Air Refueling Wing annual award winners for 2015 received their awards during a ceremony and banquet held in Kokomo, Ind., Feb. 6.

The guest speaker for the evening was retired Chief Master Sgt. Eric Jaren who spoke of teamwork and self-improvement.

"There is so much challenge and change in front of us; we have to keep pushing each other to reach our potential," said Jaren.

Jaren applauded the award winners for their hard work and commitment to the mission.

"In this room, there are people that are giving you opportunities to succeed; all you have to do is reach out and take those opportunities," said Jaren. "We as an Air Force need you to keep going above and beyond for yourself and one another."

The 434th ARW Annual Award winners for 2015 were:

Airman of the Year

- Senior Airman Jamail Baldwin, 434th Operations Support Squadron

NCO of the Year

- Master Sgt. Deborah Sweet, 434th Maintenance Group

Senior NCO of the year

- Senior Master Sgt. Christo-

pher Brill, 434th Civil Engineer Squadron

First Sergeant of the Year

- Master Sgt. Tonya Gonzales, 434th Security Forces Squadron

Recruiter of the Year

Master Sgt. Constance Chapman

Company Grade Officer of the year

- 2nd Lt. Erica Morgan, 434th Maintenance Group

Field Grade Officer of the year

- Lt. Col. Fredrick Frank, 434th Aerospace Medicine Squadron

Civilian Supervisor of the Year

- Mrs. Deanna Gibson, 434th Air Refueling Wing

Civilian Non Supervisor of the Year

- Mr. Russell Stewart, 434th Maintenance Squadron



U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Andrew Crawford

Grissom's annual award winners and their leadership pose for a photo during a recognition banquet in Kokomo Ind., Feb. 6.

New YR representative strives to help others

**By Staff Sgt.
Jami Lancette**
Public Affairs staff

A yellow ribbon has often been associated to a safe return of a loved one, and now a new representative strives to uphold its purpose through a program designed to support returning Airmen.

Master Sgt. James Hoagland recently stepped into his new role as 434th Air Refueling Wing Yellow Ribbon Rippon Program manager, with the goal of helping others and bringing awareness to the program and the benefits it provides to Airman and their families.

"As a school teacher on the civilian side, I have a passion for helping others achieve their goals and foster good morale," said Hoagland. "That's what drew me to the position as the Yellow Ribbon representative, because it's a program that helps the troops and their families as well

"They provide a wealth of resources; It helped me and my family, so in turn I want to help our troops at Grissom," Hoagland added.

Hoagland brings with him the aptitude and experience to help the program continue to succeed and grow throughout the wing.

"I'm very excited to have Master Sgt. Hoagland as our new yellow ribbon program representative," said Col. Doug Schwartz, 434th Air Refueling Wing commander. "He brings a tremendous amount of experience when it comes to taking care of Airmen.

"He has successfully managed a number of



U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Jami Lancette

Master Sgt. James Hoagland, 434th Air Refueling Wing Yellow Ribbon Reintegration program manager, scans participants during a program event in Orlando, Fla., Dec. 19.

programs across the wing and is the absolute perfect selection, and a great fit for the program," added Schwartz.

The YRRP promotes the well-being of reservists and their families by connecting them with resources before and after deployments. It began in 2008 following a congressional mandate for the Department of Defense to assist reservists and National Guard members in maintaining resiliency as they transition between their military and civilian roles.

"Our Airman are deploying all the time, and sometimes they don't always get the chance to take advantage of a yellow ribbon event, but I encourage them to try," said Hoagland "It not only benefits the member, but it also benefits the non-member; it makes them more aware of what our troops do and the

resources that are available to them as well."

The events are for service members who have deployed for more than 90 days but exclude deployments for training. Each member can take up to two adult guests. All Defense Eligibility Enrollment System children count as one guest, and the other guest can be spouse, significant other, parents, siblings, roommates or even friends.

"I definitely recommend it," said Staff Sgt. Brent Cannon, 434th Aerospace Medicine Squadron medical technician. "I think being in the military gives us a basic knowledge of everything, however having a chance to actually come down here for one of these events puts everything into a more detailed perspective.

"They have more time to answer questions one on one, and just to be able to interact with other members from the other reserve

bases is very beneficial," added Cannon.

To show his support for the new representative and Grissom Airmen, Schwartz was present during the event and received some great feedback.

"Overwhelmingly, I hear from our Airmen that they truly love the experience of the yellow ribbon," said Schwartz. "I think it makes them more resilient and better prepared and ultimately more readied Airmen for our United States Air Force."

Each year the program trains 7,000 reservists and family members in education benefits, health care and more.

Eligible members can attend up to three events. The first event can be attended prior to a scheduled deployment followed by two additional events after returning.

For information on event dates contact Hoagland at 765-688-2476.

Kelly selected as new AFRC Command Chief

By U.S. Air Force
Public Affairs Staff

The Chief of the Air Force Reserve has announced the new Command Chief Master Sergeant for Air Force Reserve Command.

Chief Master Sgt. Ericka E. Kelly, command chief for the 349th Air Mobility Wing, Travis Air Force Base, California, will fill AFRC's top enlisted position,

according to a release from Lt. Gen. James F. Jackson, commander of Air Force Reserve Command and chief of the Air Force Reserve.

Kelly will replace Command Chief Master Sgt. Cameron Kirksey, who is scheduled to retire in March.

Kelly spent most of her nearly 32 years of military service in the aeromedical evacuation career field. She trans-

ferred to the Air Force Reserve in 1993. During her career she has deployed numerous times in support of contingency operations including Operation Restore Hope and Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom.

Kelly is an aeromedical evacuation evaluator and has more than 1,400 flight hours aboard C-9A, C-17A, C-130H, WC-130J, C-141B/C



Chief Master Sgt.
Ericka E. Kelly
and KC-135R aircraft.
(AFNS)

Team Grissom seeks volunteers for AF Marathon

By Douglas Hays
Public Affairs staff

The Air Force Marathon is Sept. 17, 2016, and runners from Grissom are lacing up their sneakers in preparation.

The fitness center staff is currently gathering a list of names of those interested in forming a team for the event held at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio.

"We anticipate that Team Grissom will have great representation," said Col. Doug Schwartz, 434th Air Re-

fueling Wing commander. "What a wonderful event and an outstanding way to build camaraderie."

In addition to the 26.2 mile marathon, the event also hosts a 13.1 mile half marathon, 10K and 5K events.

"Those interested in participating as a representative of Team Grissom need to complete an Air Force Form 303 Request for Specialized Sports Training, and submit it to us by Feb. 22," said Bruce Cannady, 434th Force Support Squadron sports specialist.

Schwartz and Col. Paul Gates, 434th Air Refueling Wing vice commander have already signed up for the event.

"We look forward to others from Team Grissom joining us," Schwartz said.

Those worried about getting ready for the races can receive assistance as well.

"I can help people with training plans," said Zac Holmes, 434th FSS recreation specialist. "Training plans are also online at the Air Force Marathon website."



U.S. Air Force graphic

The Air Force Marathon is scheduled for Sept. 17, 2016 at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio, and Grissom is currently looking for volunteers. Those interested in participating as a representative of Team Grissom need to complete an Air Force Form 303 Request for Specialized Sports Training, and submit it to the base fitness center by May 1, 2016

Loggie completes 'Dopey Challenge'

By Douglas Hays
Public Affairs staff

For most, the idea of running a 5K, 10K, half-marathon and full marathon in successive days seems a bit dopey, but for one Grissom member it was a dream come true.

Kathleen LaBahn, 434th Logistics Readiness Squadron commander, competed in the Dopey Challenge, a grueling 48.6-mile-event Jan. 7-10, 2016 at Walt Disney World in Orlando, Florida.

"My goal was to survive," she said laughing, yet serious. "I'm a long distance runner, albeit slow, I have endurance. I've run many half marathons and one full marathon before this event."

The Dopey Challenge puts endurance runners through the paces running through the theme park.

"A year ago I made it a goal to run in the challenge - and survive," she said. "It was like bucket list item.

"It was hard," she laughed. "Running one race after another in successive days was grueling."

To train for the event, LaBahn began going to a local gym three to five times a week about six months prior to the event to condition her body for the endurance she would need.

"For anyone wanting to run a distance like this, I'd suggest they start training with a marathon plan and include the high intensity circuit training," she said.

What motivates someone to run so much? Food.

"I like to eat and I don't want to be fat," she laughed.

"I started running races to lose baby fat and get back into Air Force standards back in 2010," the 14-year Air Force veteran said. "I really liked doing the races and stuck to it."

By doing so she has never scored below a 90 on the fitness assessment since the Air Force adopted the latest standards.

"The Air Force makes me want



Courtesy photo

Kathleen LaBahn, 434th Logistics Readiness Squadron commander, stands with her children Abiageal and Alex following her completion of the Dopey Challenge, at Walt Disney World, Fla., Jan. 8

to be a better Airman, and this is one way I can do it," she concluded.

Grissom makes economic impact of \$124.9 million for FY15

By Staff Sgt.
Katrina Heikkinen
Public Affairs staff

As the largest employer in Miami County, Grissom has been a major contributor to the local economy since 1942, and 2015 was no exception.

The 434th Air Refueling Wing recently announced the Hoosier Wing had an economic impact of \$124.9 million for fiscal 2015.

"We are proud to be a part of this community," said Col. Doug Schwartz, 434th ARW commander. "We pride ourselves on being good neighbors who serve globally while living - and spending locally."

"Our impact is not limited to the wages of our em-

ployees, but the businesses and industries that serve as our civilian partners," he said. "Together we form a team that strengthens our community, our state and our nation."

Jason Dunn, 434th ARW comptroller, echoed how Grissom and the local economy have a direct and positive impact on each other.

"Anytime there's a construction project including building a runway, or a new building, or planting trees - all that work is done either internally or outside the fence-line," Dunn said. "Every dollar that Uncle Sam pays somebody to work here at Grissom is money that flows directly into the economy."



U.S. Air Force graphic by Tech. Sgt. Benjamin Mota

During 2015, Grissom expended \$27.4 million in equipment, supplies, contracts and minor construction, directly impacting local community job creation by more than \$25 million.

"We need each other," Schwartz said. "We can't do our jobs without the support of the community

and we're happy that we can provide a positive financial impact."

Economic impact analyses conducted by the Air Force represent only first and second tier indicators as only salaries and direct costs of labor and construction are measured, thus resulting in conservative numbers, Dunn said.

Grissom Airman has courage to ask for help

**By Staff Sgt.
Katrina Heikkinen**
Public Affairs staff

She was sitting in her car at Grissom Air Reserve Base when she got the phone call from her mother: her family had been targeted by fraudulent fast cash scammers who prey on military members.

"My father lost his job back in May, which led us to being evicted from our house," said Senior Airman Alexis Wilson, 434th Force Support Squadron services technician.

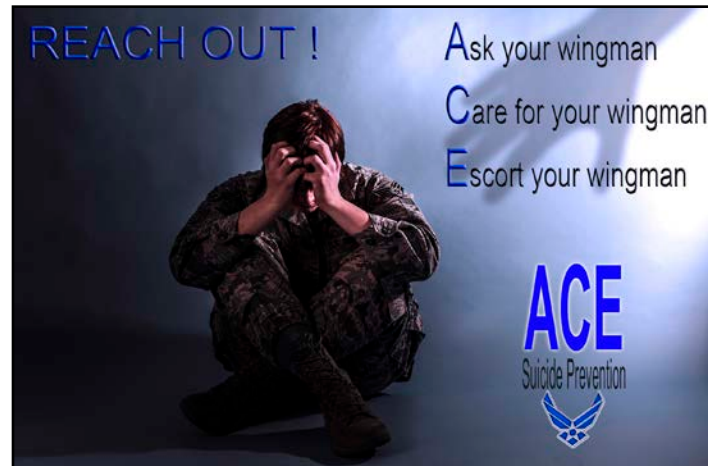
"This [scam] put my mom's account into negative 20 thousand dollars."

"It was just too much; I broke down," she said. "When my mom called me and told me what happened, I didn't know what I was going to do to fix it and I thought, 'I'm just going to end it.'"

Wilson said she walked into lodging and reached out to the first person she saw and notified them that she needed help immediately, or else she was going to hurt herself.

Within minutes, her Grissom family was by her side.

"I'm so thankful for all the people at Grissom who helped me because they took time out of



U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Ralph VanHoutem

As a Wingman, be aware when someone is reaching out for help or may just need someone to talk too. If there is a threat of harm to themselves, dial 911 or have them call a counselor at Military One Source at 1-800-342-9647.

their schedule; it wasn't just them doing their job, they came out of their job and became a person and it was like I had a family that came to my rescue and I'm completely grateful for every person that was involved," she said.

Wilson said asking for help is not easy, and takes courage.

"A lot of people are scared to get help; people don't want other people to know their business and I didn't want people to know my personal business, but had I not gotten help, it could have been so much worse," she added. "Getting help was probably the best thing I could have ever done."

Wilson said the Air Force's emphasis on suicide prevention served as a reminder that she could ask for help and multiple people would be there to help her.

"Sometimes having someone to actively listen to what you're going through is all it takes," she said. "For me, there were so many people - security forces, medical, services, and mental health - who all listened to me and helped me look life through another lens and realize how the good outweighs the bad."

Paying attention to your Wingmen really can make a difference. Even if nothing appears to be wrong,

just being there for someone can change someone's life."

According to Erin Michael Jolliff, 434th ARW director of psychological health, suicide prevention and the Wingman concept is not just a box to check; it's something that is reinforced in the Air Force culture and core values.

"There's a stigma when it comes to reaching out for mental health in the Armed Forces," Jolliff said. "But the Air Force has really changed their outlook on mental health. In my tenure at Grissom, I've seen events similar to Wilsons' and the seamless care and compassion of Airmen taking care of each other at Grissom is humbling."

Jolliff is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week and offers a variety of services including referral to private providers to ensure confidentiality.

"This year, the 2016 suicide prevention month theme is 'We are Connected,'" she said. "

This theme reiterates that the key to suicide prevention is maintaining connections with each other. Grissom continues to provide a comprehensive approach to mental health."

Civilians recognized during commander's call

By Douglas Hays
Public Affairs staff

Two Grissom members were recognized for 30 years of federal service during a civilian commander's call here March 9.

Master Sgt. Brian Achenbach, a crew chief with the 434th Maintenance Squadron and Jerry Hum-

phrey, 434th Communications Squadron information manager, were both recognized in front of their peers for their service.

Three others were recognized for 20 years of service during the ceremony.

They are:
Senior Master Sgt. Christopher Feltis, 434th MXS

Master Sgt. Scott Allen, 434th Operations Support Squadron
Master Sgt. Charles Stettler, 434th MXS

Grissom's civilian supervisor of the quarter and civilian non-supervisor of the quarter were also recognized.

They are Marty Foye, and Mike Ryan, both the 434th Air Refueling wing finance management office.

Communicators defeat Engineers

By Douglas Hays
Public Affairs staff

Grissom's version of the 'Big Dance' tipped off Feb. 6 as units took to the hardwood for the annual intramural basketball tournament.

The Communicators from the 434th Communications Squadron downed the Engineers of the 434th

Civil Engineer Squadron 32-29 to open the double elimination tournament.

Eight teams began the tournament with championship dreams but two teams' dreams turned to nightmares as they were bounced in the first round. The Engineers and the 434th Security Forces 'B' teams were both sent packing early.

"After the renovation of our basketball court it's great to see people competing and having fun," said Col. Doug Schwartz, 434th Air Refueling Wing commander. "Events like this foster not only physical fitness but also improve morale and camaraderie. Besides, basketball is an important part of our Hoo-sier heritage!"

Renovations included putting in bleachers so spectators could safely watch the games and resurfacing the court.

"After two years with no annual basketball tournament, players from all teams played aggressively with good sportsmanship," said Bruce Cannady, 434th Force Support Squadron fitness center director.



Nicholas McClure, 434th Communications Squadron prepares to use a pick set up by a teammate to elude Alex Barone's, 434th Civil Engineer Squadron, defense during the first round of play in Grissom's annual basketball tournament at Grissom Air Reserve Base, Ind., Feb. 6

U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Jami Lancette

Desert Storm, from page 5

Dawn Everett was a navigator and first lieutenant at the time.

"I was the only female crewmember from Grissom to deploy to the theater for Desert Storm," she said.

"I remember the briefing we received the day before the 'war' kicked off and the huge unknown, it was a bit scary," she said. "After the first combat mission was under our belt, it was business as usual!"

At the beginning of the gulf crisis, the 434th AREFW provided volunteer aircrews and maintenance personnel who deployed to forward operating locations in New England and Europe within 12 hours of the first phone call from Air Force Reserve Headquarters.

The wing, along with other units,

served as a 'transatlantic air bridge' to provide inflight refueling to fighter and transport aircraft travelling to the Middle East. After the massive movement of aircraft was completed the unit switched its operations to Saudi Arabia.

The 434th AREFW banded with other reserve, active and Air National Guard refueling units to form one of the world's largest tanker task forces.

The 434th and its partners flew more than 7,000 refueling missions with over 30,000 hours of flight time offloading nearly seven million pounds of fuel to more than 25,000 receivers!

"To this day I have not seen that capability repeated with all the activations and deployments since,"

Hoffman said.

In addition to having members in Saudi Arabia, the 434th AREFW had security forces members deployed to Ellsworth AFB, South Dakota, and medics deployed to Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio.

"Desert Storm would be the first of many deployments and operations the wing would participate in," said Col. Doug Schwartz, 434th ARW commander. "The 434th has served with distinction in every campaign since then."

Gen. Merrill McPeak, Air Force chief of staff at the time, recognized the unit as well, saying "your strength in peace and your courage in battle have earned you the respect of the free world."