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Volume

May 2013

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# Heartland WARRIOR

Vol. 18, No. 5  
May 2013

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

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U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Mark Orders-Woempner

## On the cover...

Senior Airman Jessica Weatherman, 434th Air Refueling Wing command and control technician, uses a base emergency notification system here April 14. Command post controllers must be proficient in four core functions, which include tracking aircraft, reporting critical incidents, emergency notification and message processing.

# Stephens to lead MSG

By Senior Airman Jami Lancette  
Public Affairs staff

As warm weather rolls in and seasons change, so too will Grissom as it welcomes a new 434th Mission Support Group commander.

Col. William Stephens takes command of the 434th MSG here June 2, bringing with him knowledge, experience and a servant's heart.

"You have to be a public servant and you have to know and understand what it takes to lead," said Stephens. "You have to be open and to listen to what the members of a unit are saying as well as be open to change and be flexible."

In his new role, Stephens will be responsible for supporting the mission of the 434th Air Refueling Wing, the largest KC-135R Stratotanker unit in the Air Force Reserve Command, through a variety of functions including infrastructure, services, logistics, personnel, communications, contracting and security.

The colonel received his commission from Officer Training School after graduating from Arizona State University. He is a navigator and has held a variety of operational, command and staff positions at the squadron, wing and major command levels.

After serving in the regular Air Force he became a law enforcement officer serving as a Riverside County, Calif., deputy sheriff and as a U.S. Customs special agent. Simultaneously, he joined the Air Force Reserve in March 1987.

Stephens has served in a variety of leadership roles in numerous environments giving him the experience and qualification to take the reins of the support group.

His command assignments include leading the 512th Mission Support Group at Dover Air Force Base, Del.; the 910th Mission Support Group at Youngstown Air



U.S. Air Force photo

Col. William Stephens

Reserve Station, Ohio; and most recently the 315th Mission Support Group, Charleston AFB, S.C.

In his current role with the 315th MSG, he is responsible for the organization, training and equipping of the groups more than 650 members.

On top of serving in multiple command assignments, Stephens also deployed to Southwest Asia in 2010 as a senior air reserve component advisor.

He said with experience comes an understanding of how to lead.

"I should be fairly consistent and stable with my decisions and be reasonable," he elaborated. "I will follow the regulations and guidelines to execute our mission, and I will deal with exceptions as they come on a case by case basis."

With his June arrival date approaching, Stephens said he is looking forward to hitting the ground running with his sights set on mission accomplishment.

"I'm looking forward to the opportunity," said Stephens. "I actually started out as a KC-135 navigator, so I'm getting back to it, and I'm just looking forward to getting there and getting involved with the mission and what Grissom has to offer."

# Airmen stand down, focus on resiliency

By Maj. Kelly Howard  
Public Affairs staff

It's all about balance; understanding it, seeking it and maintaining it.

Like other Air Force Reserve Command units, the 434th Air Refueling Wing participated Wingman Day 2013 here April 14.

Wingman Day is an annual event meant to foster interactive discussion related to the importance of comprehensive Airman fitness and the wingman as a mentor; Airmen taking care of Airmen 24/7, 365 days a year.

"We take an operational pause to focus attention on what's most valuable to the Air Force Reserve – our people," said Lt. Gen. James Jackson, AFRC commander. "To be an effective combat force, we need resilient citizen Airmen, who are capable of dealing with life's challenges."

This Wingman Day, the focus was on four different but intertwined pillars of comprehensive Airman fitness – mental, physical, social, and spiritual. The goal was to maintain positives in each one for overall wellness, resilience and balance.

"Although the theme for Wingman Day changes each year, the overall goal is consistent," said Chaplain (Maj.) Obadiah Smith Jr., 434th ARW chaplain, who helped coordinate Grissom's third Wingman Day. "In our fast-paced environment, the stand down gives squadrons the opportunity to slow down and reflect on what it means to be a wingman, to remind us that we need to



Staff Sgt. Aaron Williams, a 434th Aerospace Medicine Squadron health services craftsman, stretches to reach a toy brain during a scavenger hunt as part of Wingman Day April 13. Williams was encased in a lycra band and supported by Staff Sgt. Christina Rudell, a health services management apprentice, and other members of the 434th AMDS, as they made their way through the clinic for the scavenger hunt.

take care of one another, to not overlook signs of stress in fellow wingmen and to take time to mentor."

Airmen from each squadron facilitated three-hour training sessions, where discussions focused on the four pillars and how Airmen relate them to their own comprehensive fitness.

The key points discussed for each of the pillars included:

- Mental: The ability to cope, liking oneself and approaching things in a positive way.

- Physical: Having the physical ability to do whatever one sets their mind to, meeting exercise goals, and eating right.

- Social: Maintaining valued friendships and relationships, having healthy boundaries, and the ability to sever unhealthy relationships.

- Spiritual: Remaining connected to the beliefs, principles and values that spiritually nourish and sustain a sense of well-being and purpose, which sometimes includes a purpose greater than oneself.

If Airmen feel a pillar is out of balance in their life, help is available.

"First of all, we encourage Airmen to look out for one another, and this means noticing when your fellow Airman is under stress and then utilizing the ACE method," said Alison Duncan, Grissom sexual assault response coordinator. "The ACE method involves asking (if they are thinking of hurting themselves), caring and escorting (them to get help).

"This includes utilizing the agencies available for help both on and off base," Duncan continued. "A good starting

point is the Airmen and Family Readiness Center, chaplain's office and behavioral health services coordinator."

Mentoring was added to this year's theme, which expanded on the traditional view that mentoring is simply applied to professional development. According to the Wingman Toolkit website, Airmen can mentor their peers and a mentor supports and encourages personal growth, honest communication, maximizing potential, developing skills and seeking help.

"I believe the critical message was to be there for your fellow wingman," said Master Sgt. Tanisha Silva, 434th Force Support Squadron services specialist. "Communicate, observe and listen. A wingman is 24/7, not just on a unit training assembly weekend."

Small group discussions allowed the members to apply the Wingman Day concepts and mentoring.

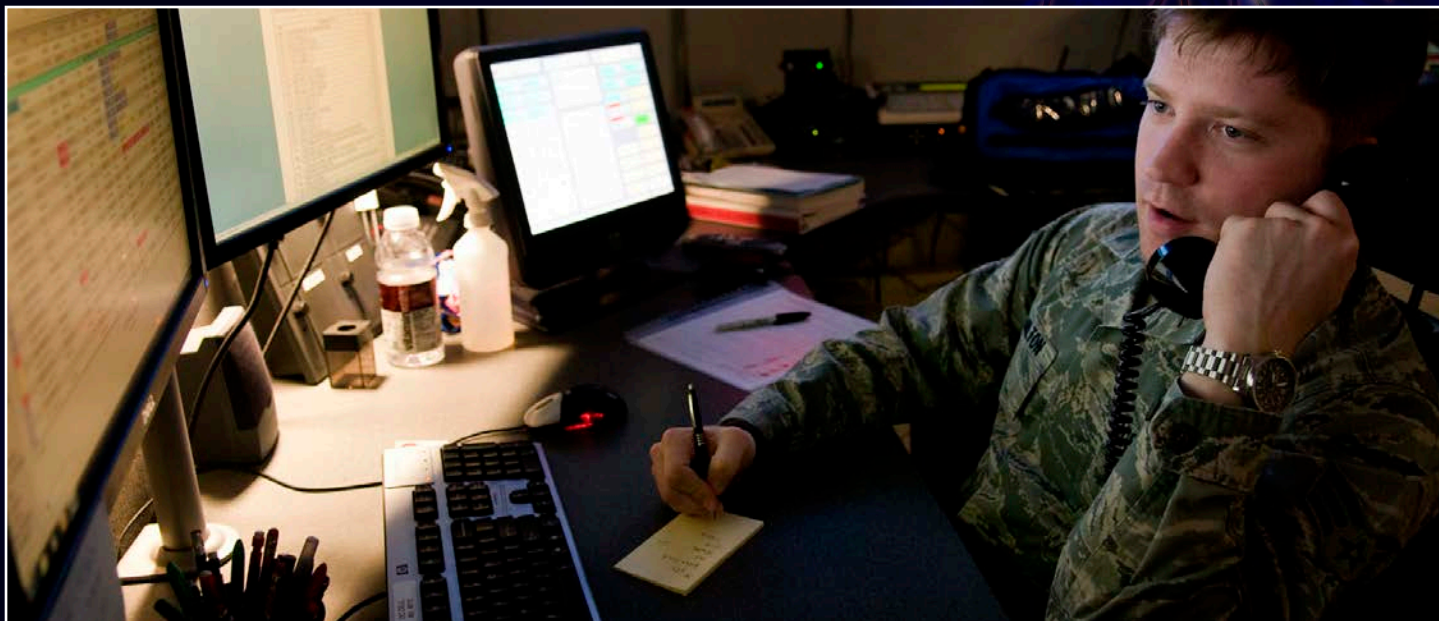
Teambuilding exercises rounded out the day, with groups like the 434th FSS choosing an activity that required Airmen to stay connected while moving a hula hoop from person to person. The 434th Aerospace Medicine Squadron had its Airmen work as one on a scavenger hunt while encased in a giant band that held them together.

"The team-building component allows for a little friendly competition, a break from the normal routine," Duncan summarized. "It's a fun and creative outlet to build relational connectivity."



# Grissom's nerve center:

## *Command post keeps mission going, critical info flowing*



*U.S. Air Force photos and graphic by Tech. Sgt. Mark Orders-Woempner*

Senior Airman William Hamilton, 434th Air Refueling Wing command and control technician, discusses flight schedules with Grissom's base operations in the command post April 14. Command post controllers monitor and track all Grissom flights.

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

Behind locked doors and security cameras lies a nerve center staffed with highly-qualified Airmen who keep the mission going and vital information flowing 24/7.

And while Grissom command post controllers keep tabs on all that happens on base, many may not know exactly what goes on inside their highly-secure and windowless world.

"The purpose of the command post is to relay orders of our commander to his forces in the field, collect information from the field, and present it to the commander so he can make timely and accurate decisions," said Senior Master Sgt. Jeffrey Withrow, 434th Air Refueling Wing command post superintendent.

"We are the eyes and ears of the commander," echoed Senior Airman Jessica Weatherman, 434th ARW command and control technician. "We have to know what's happening on the base and also at higher levels in relation to national security."

To fulfill their vital mission, Withrow said controllers must all be proficient in four core functions, which

include tracking aircraft, reporting critical incidents, emergency notification and message processing.

"A fully-qualified controller will be able to perform all of these functions," he said. "If we fail to act properly, it can have a wide-reaching impact across the base."

As part of their jobs, controllers receive highly-sensitive, and at times top-secret, emergency messages from higher headquarters, which must then be decoded, explained Senior Airman Shauna Allen, 434th ARW command and control technician.

"It's like our own secret language," added Weatherman.

To receive some of the most critical information, controllers use a myriad of high-tech equipment, including an electromagnetic pulse and jam-resistant portable satellite communications terminal that connects with the Military Strategic and Tactical Relay satellite system, she continued.

These systems provide secure communications that allow command and control functions to continue in the event of a major disaster that could hinder communications.

Another critical portion of their job involves Grissom's alert mission.

A certain number of aircraft at

Grissom are always on alert, and Allen said the command post must notify alert crews and other personnel needed to respond to emergencies.

Command post controllers also facilitate communication between pilots and those on the ground, which can prove critical during in-flight emergencies.

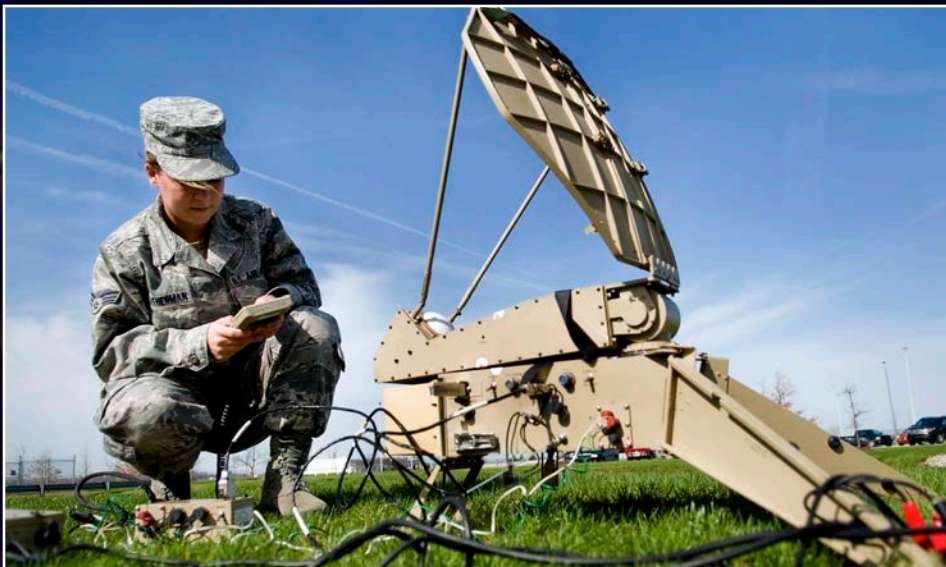
Coordinating with the wing commander, operations group commander, maintenance personnel, emergency responders and more, controllers make sure everyone is ready to assist during an IFE, said Weatherman. They even contact the aircraft manufacturer in the most serious of emergencies, she added.

With the largest KC-135R Stratotanker unit in the Air Force Reserve Command, and several special missions, the Grissom command post is a busy place.

Tech. Sgt. Matthew Huston, 434th ARW command and control technician, has worked in the career field for 10 years at various units and said how each command post operates depends on the mission they support.

Of all his experiences, Huston





**Senior Airman Jessica Weatherman, 434th Air Refueling Wing command and control technician, sets up a portable satellite communications terminal that connects with the Military Strategic and Tactical Relay satellite system.**

added his current posting at Grissom has been the biggest challenge.

"Grissom is the most challenging because we serve three commands; Air Force Reserve Command, Air Mobility Command and (U.S.) Strategic Command," he explained. "There's a lot of responsibility that comes with this job."

However, Huston said he enjoys working in this fast-paced environment that is constantly changing.

"It's never the same thing," he said. "There's always something new that pops up."

And, because Airmen who work in the command post are entrusted with a high level of responsibility, they undergo in-depth training.

Command post controllers attend a six-week technical training school at Keesler Air Force Base, Miss., followed by two, 6-month on-the-job training periods to attain full certification, said Withrow. At the end of each period, the 434th ARW commander personally certifies every controller.

While it may take a lot to be a controller, the career field has many benefits as well.

"You get to know everything that is happening on the base," said Withrow. "It's also a high-visibility career field because controllers are talking to wing leadership regularly."

For Airmen unsure of where they may end up in the future, being a controller may be appealing as all bases have a command post, he added. There are opportunities to deploy for the same reason.

"It opens up a lot of doors for you because you interface with different commands and because of the skills you learn," added Huston.

Weatherman said being a controller gives her a detailed perspective of the military on a larger scale.

"I have a better understanding of the mission as a whole and of the national defense structure," she elaborated.

Withrow said the command post usually attracts Airmen who are academically minded. Due to the high standards, controllers undergo monthly testing to assure they maintain proficiency and stay sharp as they carry out their duties.

"It's a very academically-intensive career field," he continued, adding that controllers also need to be good communicators because many of their duties are conducted over a phone, radio, computer or satellite systems.

Being able to work and keep cool under pressure is another important trait, he added.

"You need to prioritize and use time management skills," said Allen. "You have to be able to multitask like you breathe."

Persistent training is another way controllers stay prepared.

"We participate in exercises almost every month and make them as intense and realistic as possible," said Withrow. "You'll never get bored. There's always something going on and there's always something to do."

The command post is currently looking for three, highly-qualified senior airmen or staff sergeants to fill available slots. The opportunity for full-time positions and tours of duty may become available.

Anyone interested in a challenging and rewarding career as a command post controller should contact Withrow at 688-2124 or via e-mail.



**Master Sgt. Craig Petrowsky, 434th Air Refueling Wing command post training manager, operates an electromagnetic pulse hardened communications device.**



# SecAF Donley announces departure

WASHINGTON -- Secretary of the Air Force Michael Donley has announced his plan to step down June 21 as the Air Force's top civilian after serving nearly five years.

"It's been an honor and a privilege to serve with our Air Force's great Airmen," Donley said. "Their accomplishments have been nothing short of impressive and I'm humbled to be a part of this team. The Air Force has been a way of life for so much of my career, I know it will be bittersweet to say farewell."

Donley was confirmed as the 22nd secretary of the Air Force Oct. 2, 2008.

He served as the acting secretary since June of that year, as well as for seven months in 1993, making him the longest serving secretary in the history of the Air Force. He also served as the service's top financial officer from 1989 to 1993.

"Mike has been an invaluable adviser during my first two months as Secretary of Defense and has been an outstanding leader of the Air Force for nearly five years," said Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel. "His leadership came during a challenging time for the Air Force, and he helped instill a culture of

responsibility, initiative and professionalism to the service. Mike has been an unwavering champion for our Airmen, their families, and for American airpower. The Air Force he leaves behind is more resilient and more respected because of his leadership and personal dedication."

Though Donley has not yet announced any future plans, he remains dedicated during his remaining time to supporting the Secretary of Defense in the many challenges that lie ahead for the service.

"In the meantime, there remains much to do," Donley said. "This is an extraordinary and excit-

ing time for our Air Force, filled with both challenges and opportunities. I remain confident that the strength and professionalism of our Airmen, and the commitment and determination of... our military and civilian leadership team, will continue to see us through."

Donley's 35 years of experience in the national security community also includes service in the Senate, White House and the Pentagon. Prior to assuming his current position, he served as the Director of Administration and Management in the Office of the Secretary of Defense. (AFNS)

## Johannsen takes command of 434th MOF

By Staff Sgt. Carl Berry  
Public Affairs staff

Grissom Airmen recently welcomed a new maintenance commander to the base.

In front of friends, family and the Airmen she now leads, Maj. Amy Johannsen took charge of the 434th Maintenance Operations Flight during an assumption of command ceremony here April 13.

Johannsen first joined the regular Air Force in August 1986 as an aerospace ground equipment mechanic and joined the Air Force Reserve in 1991.

After earning a Bachelor of Science degree in human resource management she received her commission through a Deserving Airmen Commissioning Program in February 2002.

Johannsen served as Executive Officer for the 910th Maintenance Group at Youngstown Air Reserve Station, Ohio, before retraining as an aircraft maintenance officer in 2009. Since then, she has held a variety of leadership positions to include serving as an officer in charge,



U.S. Air Force photos by Staff Sgt. Carl Berry

**Maj. Amy Johannsen receives the 434th Maintenance Operations Flight guidon from Col. Paul Weimer as she assumes command of the unit here April 13. Weimer is the 434th Maintenance Group commander and presided over the ceremony.**

operations officer and commander.

Shortly after assuming command, the major spoke about her excitement for her new assignment and how she will continue to apply the Air Force core values in all aspects of her job. She also said she expects the same from her Airmen.

Col. Paul Weimer, 434th Maintenance

Group commander, presided over the ceremony and spoke of how grateful he was to have Johannsen on board.

"I am confident in her abilities to lead the maintenance operations flight and am pleased to have her on the 434th Maintenance Group leadership team," said Weimer.

# Marines supply battlefield communication

By Staff Sgt. Ben Mota  
Public Affairs staff

From signal flags to satellites, history has proven communication can be the difference between victory and defeat, and this is never truer than on the modern battlefield.

To ensure they can provide vital communications capabilities to today's war fighter, 23 Marine Corps reservists assigned to Detachment 1, Communications Company, Headquarters and Service Battalion, 4th Marine Logistics Group here participated in a communications exercise April 12-14.

"For us as a communications detachment, we have a responsibility to provide command and control systems capability to a battalion level or higher," said Capt. Markus Trouerbach, Detachment 1 inspector instructor. "We can provide approximately 30 users with classified and unclassified voice and data capabilities so they can communicate anywhere in the world."

And, providing such capability is vital to the war fighter down range.

"For us it's about supporting the war fighter; everything we do is to sustain them," explained Gunnery Sgt. Brian Kenefic, Detachment 1 operations chief. "If we don't provide effective communications capability, they don't get the logistics support they need, including fuel, food, ammo and medical (supplies)."

The main focus of this specific communications exercise was validation.

"Our primary mission



U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Ben Mota

Lance Cpl. Brett Ferry, left, and Cpl. Luis Barrera, both Detachment 1, Communications Company, Headquarters and Service Battalion, 4th Marine Logistics Group field radio operators and Marine Corps reservists, set up an antenna during a communication exercise here April 13.

was validating that all equipment was operational to meet our objectives," said Kenefic. "The validation process ensures that we have the proper equipment, the equipment is working and our Marines are following the procedures for setting it up."

"We try to find out what our capabilities are with personnel and equipment," echoed Trouerbach. "It's important for us to know we can provide those capabilities ourselves."

In the long run, Trouerbach said the goal is for

the detachment to have everything down to a complete science on how to deploy equipment and personnel to provide battlefield communication.

"Our overall goal in the next 12 months is to have a complete standard operating procedure that would have everything detailed in it including network architecture, every program for every piece of equipment, the numbers of personnel needed to run everything, the packing for the equipment and the lift requirements needed

to move it from point A to point B," the inspector instructor explained.

He also pointed out that a detachment is not normally responsible for such detailed planning, but because they are geographically separated from their company, they need that level of preparedness.

Having that level of readiness also involves making sure each of the Marines are familiar with a host of different communication technology.

One of the primary tools used by the communication Marines during this exercise was an MRC-142C, which provides telephone and internet services through line-of-sight with other MRC-142s. Used properly, the devices can allow for effective communication at a maximum distance of 35 miles between antennas.

During the training, Marines pieced together each component of the MRC-142s, including antennas.

"When setting up the antennas it's critical that they are facing the direction of the antenna they are receiving information from," said Cpl. Matthew Smythe, Detachment 1 communications specialist, who added they also keep safety in mind.

"We have to be observant and ensure that the antennas are not near power lines and that weather conditions are appropriate," Smythe added.

The next step for Detachment 1 is an upcoming, larger-scale exercise this summer at Camp Lejeune, N.C., where the Marines will push one step closer to their goal.



# Keeping it clean, Grissom Soldiers ready for war



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Bryan A. Randolph

**Staff Sgt. Steve Barclay, 855th Quartermaster Company platoon sergeant, operates a laundry system during a recent exercise at Fort Hunter Liggett, Calif. Grissom Army Reservists provided laundry and shower services to approximately 4,000 Soldiers.**

**By Staff Sgt. Ben Mota**  
*Public Affairs staff*

Keeping dirty laundry clean is a chore most people are familiar with, but doing it for thousands of Soldiers in a war environment takes a team of true professionals.

Forty-four Soldiers from the 1st Detachment, 855th Quartermaster Company here at Grissom provided laundry and shower services to approximately 4,000 Soldiers from units around the country during the March 2013 Warrior Exercise at Fort Hunter Liggett, Calif.

The exercise gave participating units an opportunity to rehearse military maneuvers and tactics, said 1st Sgt. Jay Ross, the company's first sergeant. In addition, he said it provided practical training for support units by providing them the opportunity to meet the challenges of an extended and integrated battlefield.

"During the training, our primary mission was direct support," Ross added. "The training simulated a

long-term battlefield scenario that provided multiple training elements in addition to our typical military occupational specialty job responsibilities."

The exercise, which simulated nation-building necessities that can follow large-scale combat operations, ran 24 hours-a-day in the camps where the Soldiers lived and conducted missions.

"While we were there we worked around-the-clock," said Staff Sgt. Stephen Barclay, company platoon sergeant. "We had three separate platoons in three different locations, all conducting their own missions."

According to Barclay, the company processed 5,000 bundles of laundry with a 72-hour turn-around and provided over 14,000 showers to military members participating in the exercise.

Fort Hunter Liggett is the largest installation in the Army Reserve, with more than 160,000 acres of mountains, valleys, rivers, plains and forests. It provides areas ideal for maneuvers as well as state-of-

the-art training facilities.

"The terrain contained all of the different land features that could be identified on a topographic map," said Barclay. "This provided us a more realistic war environment without space limitations."

Participating Soldiers handled base defense operations throughout the exercise, running convoys across the post and reacting to emergency situations or enemy assaults when they occurred.

"The event allowed soldiers to live in a deployment environment and conduct full-scale training missions with real-world challenges included," added Ross. "Those challenges would have been impossible for us to duplicate here at Grissom."

The unit was assessed on five separate collective tasks throughout their training.

Out of those tasks, the company was rated fully mission capable on two of the five tasks and was rated mission capable and proficient on the other three, said Barclay.





*U.S. Air Force graphic by Senior Airman Jami Lancette*

Pregnant Airmen are required to notify the 434th Aerospace Medicine Squadron as soon as they find out they are expecting. When put on a pregnancy profile, Airmen can be restricted from certain activities such as physical fitness tests or being in hazardous areas.

**By Senior Airman Jami Lancette**  
*Public Affairs staff*

The news of pregnancy often brings with it certain expectations, but for pregnant Airmen, there are expectations placed on them as well.

Expectant Airmen are required to notify the 434th Aerospace Medicine

Squadron as soon as they find out they are pregnant, said Tech. Sgt. Nichole Nadasky, 434th AMDS public health journeyman.

"If you find out that you're pregnant, you need to report to the medical squadron as soon as possible to be placed on a profile," Nadasky added.

"You will also need to bring with you a letter

from your doctor."

As with any prenatal care, this is meant not to only protect the child, but the mother as well.

"The whole purpose is protection for the mother and fetus, so it's important that they report early so we can make sure they are not in any unsafe situations or areas," said Senior Master Sgt. Jeffrey Castle-

berry, 434th AMDS health services superintendent.

When put on a pregnancy profile, Airmen can be restricted from certain activities such as physical fitness tests or being in areas they may expose the mother to chemicals or other industrial hazards.

Visiting the clinic in a timely manner also gives AMDS staff and a pregnant Airman's supervisor time to adjust any special workplace environment needs that the expectant mother might require for safety, explained Nadasky.

And while timeliness helps improve safety, the time it takes to report is minimal, said Tech. Sgt. Erica Morgan, 434th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron personnel specialist, who referred to it as an in-and-out trip.

"It was very quick, as long as you bring in your doctor's note with the estimated delivery date you are fine," Morgan added.

For questions about the policy contact Nadasky at 688-3597 or Castleberry at 688-3598.

## 434th ARW announces Airman promotions

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

From their first to their last, America's Airmen earn each stripe of rank.

Nearly 30 Airmen from the 434th Air Refueling Wing here recently earned their next stripe. Their names are as follows:

**To master sergeant:**

- Tony Russell, 434th Security Forces Squadron

**To technical sergeant:**

- Jacqueline Holmquest, 434th Operations Support Squadron  
- Jan Markiewicz, 434th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron

- Michael Meyer, 434th Air Refueling Wing

- Daniel Stout, 434th Maintenance Squadron

- Zsolt Szivak, 434th AMXS

- Gerald Smith, 434th AMXS

**To staff sergeant:**

- Joseph Fruggiero, 434th MXS  
- Erica Sherwood, 434th Force Support Squadron

**To senior airman:**

- Janette Arnold, 434th MXS  
- Torrie Bailey, 434th MXS  
- Nicholas Baker, 434th FSS  
- Dionta Bonner, 434th FSS  
- Justin Lindstrom, 434th Logistics Readiness Squadron  
- Jason Noralez, 434th AMXS  
- Nolan Ritter, 434th LRS

- Christopher Robinson, 434th MXS

- Darin Simpson, 434th Civil Engineering Squadron

- David Smart, 434th AMXS

- Lauren Werner, 434th Aerospace Medicine Squadron

**To airman 1st class:**

- Jasmine Guyton, 434th FSS  
- Keneisha Richards, 434th SFS  
- Lauren Roberts, 434th CES  
- David Ruffin, 434th CES  
- Joshua Schumacher, 434th AMXS

- Zachariah Smith, 434th SFS  
- Jordan Suchovsky, 434th OSS

**To airman:**

- Samone Hankins, 434th SFS  
- Damion Reed, 434th SFS



# Grissom pilot takes 2nd final flight



U.S. Air Force photo by Sonya Brown

Lt. Col. Don Windt, 74th Air Refueling Squadron pilot, is greeted by his grandchildren Sam and Annalise Bowldy, and his son Brendan Windt after his final KC-135R Stratotanker flight here March 18. Windt retired March 24.

**By Tech. Sgt. Doug Hays**  
*Public Affairs staff*

When Lt. Col. Don Windt climbed out of a KC-135R Stratotanker after his final flight here March 18, he knew what was awaiting him.

Windt, 74th Air Refueling Squadron pilot, had been on the receiving end of water bottles and water hoses on the very same ramp nearly

19 years ago, so for him it was déjà vu.

Windt retired March 24 with approximately 36-and-one-half years of military service with a career that spanned duties both on the ground and in the air, and in both receiver and tanker aircraft.

Windt, whose call sign was Hammer, was one of four A-10 pilots in 1994 that participated in a cer-

emonial 'fini-flight' when the 45th Tactical Fighter Squadron deactivated as part of base realignment and closure actions.

That day local media, throngs of base members and families were there to see off the A-10s.

While a little more subdued, his latest fini-flight was still cause for gathering among his family and friends he's made over the years.

Windt's first duty assignment was to Keesler Air Force Base, Miss., as a supply officer in 1976.

"After Vietnam, there was a shortage of pilot slots, so I had to wait for my opportunity," the North Dakota native said.

That opportunity came in 1980 when he com-

pleted undergraduate pilot training and was assigned to the A-10 Thunderbolt II aircraft – or the Warthog.

Following tours at Royal Air Force Bentwaters, United Kingdom, and Davis-Monthan AFB, N.M., he left the regular Air Force and was hired in the Air Force Reserve's 45th TFS, where he 'troughed' for a year-and-a-half, pulling duty days whenever he could get them.

In 1987 he became an air reserve technician and began working full-time at Grissom.

He deployed to Aviano Air Base Italy for Operation Deny Flight, and when he returned, the A-10s were in the process of leaving Grissom.



"I didn't know what to do," Windt recalled. "I had kids in school and didn't want to move."

"Honestly I didn't want to fly tankers, but they held a slot open for me until I decided," he added. "My wife was supportive of whatever I wanted to do, and one morning I just woke up and said 'ok, I'll take the job.'"

Windt's decision turned out to be a good one.

"My reluctant transition turned out to be the best thing I have done for my family," he explained. "And, I get to work with a great group of people."

For Windt, some of the greatest memories are how the unit responded after 9/11.

"America had been hit, and we were taking the war to them," he recalled. "We deployed and were sleeping in sleeping bags on cots, flying ten-hour missions. We were flying in a real war, enduring miserable conditions but at the same time it felt fabulous."

"The missions we flew were the most meaningful of my life," he continued. "We took the war to them, and despite lousy conditions, lousy food, we built strong bonds. We as a group grew closer because of that experience. It was a 'Band of Brothers' type

time."

Those bonds are still strong today.

"Hammer brought me from an airman basic to the lieutenant colonel you see today," said Lt. Col. Maureen McAllen, 434th Mission Support Group commander. "One of the first things they had me do was intel briefings. They told me to go talk to tactics; so as an airman basic, I went to him to look over my briefings and make sure I had the right stuff."

That initial interaction showcased what she said she saw throughout Windt's career - his patience and ability to lead.

"He had a very patient way on how he explained things, like this is what the pilots really want to see or we don't care about this," she recalled. "He gave me the down and dirty about how to communicate from a non-flyer to a flyer and how to tell them how to fly an airplane."

McAllen also credited Windt with success in her career.

"He was the shining example of a consummate professional who was a team player and truly believed that we all are in it together and that we all have a part to do," she explained. "A lot of it was just the example he set; when it was time to do



*U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Doug Hays*

**A then Maj. Don Windt Windt, 45th Tactical Fighter Squadron celebrates after flying his final time in an A-10 here in 1994.**

business, we did business, but he knew how to have fun and didn't take himself too seriously.

"Because of how he was willing to help me and start off my career, it made such a difference," she added. "I owe it all to Donnie."

The people he flew with echoed McAllen.

"Colonel Windt is a talented pilot with many hours in both the tanker

and receiver cockpits," said Chief Master Sgt. Jeff Maier, 74th ARS chief boom operator. "He had outstanding situational awareness and a genuine respect for the enlisted force."

Now that he's no longer in the cockpit, Windt said he plans to travel all over the place.

Although there will be no fire hoses waiting for him when he lands.

**Maj. Don Windt's A-10 gets a shower from the Grissom Fire Department as he and other 45th Tactical Fighter Squadron pilots flew their final Thunderbolt II mission in 1994.**

*U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Doug Hays*



# Security Forces are basketball champions



U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Jami Lancette

Carl Berry, 434th Security Forces Squadron team guard, shoots a jumper as members from the 434th Force Support Squadron close in during an annual basketball tournament here April 13. The Cops slam dunked Force Support to take home the championship.

**By Senior Airman Jami Lancette**  
*Public Affairs staff*

Airmen took to the hardwood during Grissom's own version of March Madness.

The 434th Security Forces Squadron handcuffed the 434th Force Support Squadron 32-27 in the championship game of the double-elimination tournament April 13.

The 434th FSS opened up with an early lead before the cops called a time out to make some adjustments to their offense.

"The adjustments we made changed the tournament," said SFS guard Carl Berry.

SFS postman Michael Rivera and Derrick Harper were able to get some easy looks inside, Berry added.

Harper led the Cops in scoring with 15 points in the decisive game, while Harper chipped in four points.

Leading all scorers was Dustin Pervine with 16 points for FSS.

Playing as a team and keep-

ing the communication alive kept the nets swishing for the SFS team.

"We played as a solid cohesive unit; our defense is what made us," recalled Rivera. "Defense is what wins championships, and that was proven tonight."

This team's cohesiveness wasn't just born overnight, said Adrian West, SFS team member.

"We practiced before games, and it strengthened our abilities," added West.

Berry pointed out that a wingman mentality was also brought to the court to help earn the title.

"We continued to perform as we had throughout the tournament as one unit," he said. "We always had each other's back, and our team made it a priority that we'd never give up, and that helped us come back and win the championship."

The title game was set up when FSS emerged from the loser's bracket to stifle the cops 29-20 and force the final showdown.

## Squadrons gear up for 5K battle with t-shirt design contest

**By Staff Sgt. Carl Berry**  
*Public Affairs staff*

A battle is brewing at Grissom, and it's all in the name of fun and fitness.

Grissom is hosting a battle of the squadrons 5K race here June 1 as part of the annual Family Day activities, but this year a new formula will be used to determine the winner that will make the race down the runway a lot more interesting.

"The race on the flightline is a great experience, because it affords servicemembers and their families an opportunity to run on the flightline and around the aircraft, which is not available any other time," said Tech. Sgt. Erica Morgan, 434th Aircraft Maintenance

Squadron personnel specialist, who is spearheading the event.

In years past the first to finish the race would earn the trophy for their respective squadron, but this year it's more about a team effort.

"This year we will be taking the average running time of all participants that represent a squadron, to include the servicemembers and their dependents, and the squadron with the lowest time will be awarded the trophy," explained Morgan.

Also making this year's 5k battle unique is the inclusion of a t-shirt design contest.

"This year we will have a competition that will allow the children of Airmen to show off their artistic abilities," continued Morgan. "The winning graphic will be transferred

onto a t-shirt that will be given out to all race participants, and the creator of the winning graphic will receive a free t-shirt."

Dependents of servicemembers, ages 18 and younger, can submit a black-and-white graphic. The design that best portrays the battle of the squadrons will be selected. The deadline for submitting a graphic is May 19.

The cost to enter the race is \$15 for adults and \$10 for children 18 years old and younger.

All proceeds from the event will be presented to Grissom's Airman and Family Readiness Center and will be used to help support Grissom families during deployments.

For more information contact Morgan at 688-2268.



# Spring weather brings out motorcycles, safety focus



*U.S. Air Force photo illustration by Senior Airman Andrew McLaughlin*

Mike Thompson, 434th Communications Squadron radar maintenance technician, drives his motorcycle on base April 30. Motorcycle riders at Grissom are required to wear the proper safety equipment, attend a safety briefing and undergo a safety course.

## By Tech. Sgt. Doug Hays Public Affairs staff

Adding to the sounds of chirping birds and gentle rain of spring is thunderous roars of exhaust pipes.

Spring is back and has brought motorcycles with it, and so Grissom's safety office is reminding all riders on how to be both safe and ride within Air Force requirements.

"Our number one priority is to keep people safe," said Jerry Skiles, 434th Air Refueling Wing weapons safety manager and motorcycle program coordinator.

There are approximately 140 motorcycle riders at Grissom, and all of them are required to wear the proper safety equipment and undergo a safety briefing that outlines what that equipment is and identifies local hazards,

explained Skiles.

Unique to Indiana, is farm machinery and wildlife that may be a nuisance to those driving cars, but can be deadly to a motorcyclist.

"I hit a raccoon with my car recently and it caused \$2,100 of damages," said Skiles. "For a person on a motorcycle, it could have been deadly."

Motorcycle education doesn't stop with a briefing.

Because the base doesn't have motorcycle safety trainers, the base has partnered with Indiana's American Bikers Aimed Toward Education.

"Riders can go through an ABATE course for certification," said Skiles. "While they must pay \$50 for the course up front, once they successfully complete the program, we can reimburse them."

Because the courses are held throughout the state, reservists can find a course near them and schedule it around their lives.

Skiles said he also works with the 434th Security Forces Squadron personnel to ensure they know the standards to enforce when it comes to the proper riding attire.

"They are instructed to turn people away, who are not dressed appropriately," he explained. "Riders know the policies, and the cops enforce those policies."

When riders pull up to the gate, they are required to be wearing an approved helmet, proper eye protection, full-fingered gloves, long pants, a long-sleeve shirt or jacket, boots, and have a contrasting upper garment on their torso or reflective material.

"We have a lot of people that ride with backpacks on, and they must have reflective material on that as well if it covers up the reflective material on their torso," explained Skiles.

"The whole idea is to keep people safe," he continued. "We know with fuel prices you have more and more people riding bikes. We want to educate them and others so that everyone stays as safe as possible."

That doesn't end with the bike riders, as it also relates to those driving cars.

May is Motorcycle Safety and Awareness Month according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, who in their campaign remind all motorists to safely share the road with motorcycles and to be extra alert to help keep motorcyclists safe.

Likewise, motorcyclists are reminded to make themselves visible to other motorists.

Most accidents are not caused by motorcycles, they are most often caused by drivers, explained Skiles.

A motorcycle is small and can easily be hidden in a blind spot, and so the safety office encouraged riders to get out of that blind spot as soon as possible.

They also remind riders that while motorcycles can accelerate quickly, they don't stop as fast and need more space to come to a halt.

"Hopefully with the education we provide, and the opportunities with ABATE, we can keep our riders safe," he concluded.



# Grissom celebrates annual award winners

By Staff Sgt. Carl Berry  
Public Affairs staff

Each year, outstanding Airmen from around the Air Force are recognized for their exceptional performance and dedication to duty.

The 434th Air Refueling Wing held an award ceremony near the base April 13 to honor Airmen and Civilian of the Year award recipients.

During the event, retired Col. Gary Beebe, a former Air Force Reserve wing commander, served as the keynote speaker for the evening.

Beebe delivered a speech about the characteristics of good leadership, which include integrity, compassion, vision, competence and humility.

"Humility is the greatest and most under-used characteristic that great leaders possess," shared Beebe.

After Beebe's speech, the 2012 award recipients were formally recognized. They included:

- Company Grade Officer of the Year: Capt. Paul McComas, former 434th Operations Support Squadron intelligence officer, now stationed at Keesler Air Force Base, Miss.

- Senior Noncommissioned Officer of the Year: Chief Master Sgt. Stephen Groszek, 434th Civil Engineering Squadron fire chief

- Noncommissioned Officer of the Year: Master Sgt. Zachary Chapin, 434th Maintenance Squadron jet engine mechanic

- Airman of the Year: Senior Airman Jesse VanEngelenhoven, 434th Logistics Readiness Squadron

logistics plans technician

- First Sergeant of the Year: Master Sgt. Brian Rude, 434th LRS first sergeant

- Civilian of the Year: Jill Marconi, Grissom Airman and Family Readiness Center director

"Award banquets, such as this one, allow for their peers to see what it takes to excel and stand out among other exceptional Airmen," shared Chief Master Sgt. Karen Perkins, 434th ARW command chief. "Also, it's important to have public recognition for all of our great Airmen; they need to be recognized for the work they have done."

The award winners moved on to compete at the numbered air force level, where they competed with others from around the Air Force.



U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Ben Mota

## Spring cleaning

Jeremy King, a DMS civilian contractor, guides Airman 1st Class Eric Flowers, 434th Civil Engineer Squadron utilities apprentice, while he operates a bulldozer here during the April unit training assembly. The exercise was being done to provide Airman upgrade training on heavy equipment and to begin the process of Grissom's spring base maintenance.