

# Heartland WARRIOR

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

## Staff

Col. Don Buckley.....commander  
Lt. Col. Gary Lockard.....chief, public affairs  
Tech. Sgt. Doug Hays.....editor  
Tech. Sgt. Mark Orders-Woempner.....assistant editor  
Staff Sgt. Carl Berry.....staff writer  
Staff Sgt. Benjamin Mota.....staff writer  
Staff Sgt. Andrew McLaughlin.....staff writer  
SrA. Jami Lancette.....staff writer

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U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Andrew McLaughlin

## On the cover...

Airman Brittany Chapman, 434<sup>th</sup> Security Forces Squadron fire team member, takes aim with an M-9 pistol during weapons training here recently. During this training, security forces members charged with keeping Airmen and aircraft safe focused on tactical movement and transition drills using M-4 rifles and M-9 pistols to practice changing from a primary to secondary weapon quickly and effectively in response to threats.



## By Staff Sgt. David Salanitri *Secretary of the Air Force Public Affairs*

The Air Force released details of the service's plan to fully integrate women into previously closed career fields June 18.

The implementation plan was recently submitted to Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel for review.

More than 99 percent of Air Force positions are currently already open to female Airmen. In fact, 2013 marks the twentieth anniversary of the Department of Defense allowing women to serve as combat pilots.

The Air Force plans to open the remaining seven career fields -- all tied to special operations -- by Jan. 1, 2016.

"The Air Force has been actively integrating women into nontraditional skills since 1972," said Brig. Gen. Gina Grosso, the director of force management policy and deputy chief of staff for manpower, personnel and services. "Today, less than one percent of all positions - Active, Guard, and Reserve - are closed to women. This equates to approximately 4,700 positions in a total force of

506,000 people."

The current Air Force specialty codes that do not allow females to enter due to the 1994 Direct Ground Combat Definition and Assignment Rule include: combat rescue officer; special tactics officer; special operations weather officer; enlisted combat controller; enlisted tactical air command and control party; enlisted pararescue and enlisted special operations weather.

According to the Air Force's plan, the service will validate occupational fitness standards for every career field.

Once the standards are validated for the seven skills currently closed to women, the Air Force will notify Congress of its intent to open these skills to women and begin recruiting into these skills.

Grosso expects recruiting will begin Oct. 2015.

This implementation plan came as a result of former Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta rescinding the 1994 Direct Ground Combat exclusion rule for women in January 2013.

This rule restricted women from assignments in special operations and long range reconnaissance units. (AFNS)



# Grissom to host joint mass-casualty exercise



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

U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Lance Cpls. Brian Napier and Joel Reeser, plan their next move during a joint forces exercise.

**By Tech. Sgt. Mark Orders-Woempner**  
*Public Affairs staff*

Between Indiana corn and soybean fields, a battle will be fought on the Hoosier Heartland this summer -- a battle to save lives.

Grissom will host its second annual, joint mass-casualty exercise here June 4 as Air Force, Marine and Army reservists train for some of the most difficult scenarios American military personnel face on today's modern battlefield.

The scenario for this year will focus around a joint, U.S. military force assisting with protection of a Middle East country's democratic voting process. During the exercise, an attack will occur that will test the ability of the Air Force, Army and Marine forces' abilities to work together to render aid to and evacuate the injured while still providing protection for the voting process.

It's that joint collaboration that Bob Wydock, Grissom's deputy base emergency manager,

said makes the training realistic.

"It's more realistic because we don't operate in a vacuum, and it's not going to be our fire department overseas taking care of a disaster or only our security forces responding to an attack," explained Wydock.

"We're a group made up of many different components, so it behooves us to practice that way -- to train the way we fight."

To add to the realism and provide a better training environment, the exercise will employ explosive and smoke generating devices as well as blank ammunition. Members of the public should not be alarmed to hear loud noises including explosions, gun fire or sirens, or if they see smoke the morning of the exercise.

"By creating a realistic scenario, we give them the best training situation we can give them," said Wydock. "If we can add realism with smoke, explosions and confusion, and not let them know what's happening next, which is true to life, it



Senior Airmen Cameron Harney and Omar Tellez, both 434th Aerospace Medicine Squadron aerospace medical apprentices, tend to a U.S. Army Reserve Soldier's simulated wounds during a joint forces exercise held here Aug. 5.

becomes a more realistic scenario, and won't just be them going through the motions."

And, while the battlefield scene set amongst the amber waves of grain may not seem entirely authentic to the Middle East scenario, the location of the exercise showcases Grissom's capabilities to host such exercises and saves money.

"By doing it here we

get a really good training environment and we save a lot of money," said Wydock, noting that using another facility would necessitate travel-related expenses not incurred by a local event.

While the exercise is closed to the public for safety reasons, media outlets desiring to cover the exercise should contact the 434th ARW Public Affairs office at (765) 688-3348.



# Base hosts annual Family Appreciation Day

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

A rainy forecast held off just in time for some family fun.

Grissom held its annual Family Appreciation Day here June 1, which featured a host of activities, events and food for Airmen and their families to enjoy.

"I think there was an excellent choice of activities for the kids and families," said Tech. Sgt. James Park 434th Force Support Squadron orderly room non-commissioned officer in charge.

"Everybody I talked to while I was there was having a good time."

The special day gives Airmen a chance to relax and have fun with their families, who must often sacrifice time away from their military family members while they are away on duty. It also lets families get an up-close view of the 434th Air Refueling Wing mission with various displays including a KC-135R Stratotanker.

"Family Day is a day to bring family into the military environment, so that they can learn and see what our mission is," said Jill Marconi, 434th Airmen and Fam-



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

**Lt. Col. Erik Aufderheide 72nd Air Refueling Squadron commander leads the pack during a tricycle race held during Grissom's family day here June 1. The race was just one of the many events held for Airmen and their families.**

ily Readiness Flight director. There were also information booths on hand during the festivities for Airmen and families.

"We bring in different types of people so that family members can learn more about their benefits and entitlements as a military family member," explained Marconi. "Some of the people that we bring in offer a variety of services including veteran services and additional private organizations that offers benefits specifically for

military family members."

In the end, the majority of Grissom families left with smiles on their faces.

"I thought it turned out really good," said Maj. Doug Perry, 434th Air Refueling Wing chief of safety. "It's a good opportunity for family to come out and for members to take the day to enjoy themselves, relax and just have a good time."

"Everybody was enjoying their time," he added. "I know my kids sure did."

## Fanning replaces Donley as Air Force Secretary

Under Secretary of the Air Force Eric Fanning became the acting secretary of the Air Force June 21, succeeding Michael Donley, who departed the position after more than five years.

Fanning was confirmed under secretary by the Senate April 18 and, under federal law, automatically assumes the job of acting secretary until the president nominates and the Senate confirms a replacement. Fanning will continue to serve as under secretary during this time.

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.

The service has had numerous acting secretaries over the years. Most recently, in 2005, three individuals served in the acting role in between the tenures of Dr. James Roche and Michael

Wynne. From Jan. 20 to Nov. 4, 2005, Peter Teets, Michael Dominguez and Pete Geren filled the position, in varying durations.

The secretary is responsible for the affairs of the Department of the Air Force, including the organizing, training, equipping and providing for the welfare of its more than 334,000 men and women on active duty, 176,000 members of the Air National Guard and the Air Force Reserve, 170,000 civilians, and their families. He also oversees the



*U.S. Air Force photo*

**Eric Fanning**

Air Force's annual budget of more than \$110 billion. (AFNS)

# SFS Airmen shoot, move, communicate



*U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Andrew McLaughlin*

**Staff Sgt. Steve Salazar, 434th Security Forces Squadron fire team member, assumes a crouching position while aiming an M-4 rifle during weapons training here May 5. SFS members practiced handling their weapons effectively in response to threats.**

**By Staff Sgt. Andrew McLaughlin**  
*Public Affairs staff*

Whether at Grissom or deployed overseas, security forces need to be ready to respond at a moment's notice.

And, to keep their skills sharp, the 434th Security Forces Squadron conducted weapons and tactics training here recently.

During this training, security forces members charged with keeping Airmen and aircraft safe focused on tactical movement and transition drills using M-4 rifles and M-9 pistols to practice changing from a primary to secondary weapon quickly and effectively in response to threats, said Staff Sgt. James Marshall, 434th SFS fire team member.

"The purpose is to get it down to muscle memory," elaborated Marshall.

Muscle memory is a form of procedural memory, which involves repeating a specific motor task over time so that task becomes second nature and can be performed with little or no conscious effort.

Tech. Sgt. Alexander Harris, 434th SFS squad

leader, said such training prepares them to respond to real-world situations that are often unpredictable and evolve quickly.

"It prepares troops to be able to handle themselves in any situation, such as an active shooter," continued Harris.

"It's about utilizing all the tools on you so you don't just freeze," said Tech. Sgt. Jarred Gentile, 434th SFS squad leader. "It helps you stay in the action."

Not only does the training keep security forces Airmen in the fight, it also gives them common ground with their fellow Airmen around the world as it's part of an Air Force-wide program to standardize tactics used by all security forces members.

"It gets everyone in the Air Force on the same page with handling weapons," explained Marshall, who added that is especially important when Airmen from different units come together for an exercise or deployment.

And as the training ended, the 434th SFS Airmen not only holstered their weapons, but put away the knowledge that may one day save lives.



# Protecting Information:

## Air Force cracks down on unencrypted release of PCUI

**Tech. Sgt. Mark Orders-Woempner**  
*Public Affairs staff*

Using a new capability, the Air Force is cracking down on the unencrypted transmission of protected information, and violators could find themselves locked out and in hot water.

Recently, the Air Force has started using technology that specifically looks for protected critical unclassified information in emails sent from government to commercial servers without encryption.

This includes information that is For Official Use Only, protected under the Privacy Act of 1974, contains usernames or passwords, and sensitive personally identifiable information. Examples of PII can be found at the bottom of this article.

"The Air Force is utilizing its full capabilities to protect its members'

personal information by actively scanning emails for violations," explained Maj. Ulric Adams Jr., 434th Communications Squadron commander.

If unencrypted or unprotected PCUI information is sent and detected, a user will be locked out of their account, must re-accomplish their information assurance training and have the first colonel in their chain of command write a letter to the 24th Air Force to reestablish the member's account.

The 24th AF establishes, operates, maintains and defends Air Force networks to ensure warfighters can maintain the information advantage as U.S. forces conduct military operations around the world.

"This new capability isn't meant to prevent such information from being sent when necessary, but helps ensure it's properly protected when sent," said Dan

Harshman, 434th CS operations flight director.

"The point is, you cannot send any of that information outside the government system without protecting it," Harshman continued. "And, even if you do send it within the .mil domain, you still need to protect it by signing and encrypting it."

If an email containing PCUI can't be encrypted, there are still ways of protecting it.

If an email sent to a military organization box or an account that hasn't had the right security certificates posted, members can still protect that information by using

an approved encryption program that communications focal point can provide, explained Harshman. He also said certain documents, such as those composed in Microsoft Word, can also be password protected as an acceptable form of protection.

And, while the current focus is on email systems, Airmen are reminded to protect PCUI in all cases.

"It's about general information security," said Harshman. "You want to watch what you put out anywhere, whether it's email, on social media or wherever, it's about protecting that information."

### Knowing PII

Generally, when any two sensitive PII elements are associated in unencrypted correspondence, there may be a possible PII breach. PII breaches are reported to the Air Force PII manager at the Air Force Reserve Command and the Pentagon, so it's important to know what information is considered sensitive PII. Below are some examples:

- Names
- Social Security numbers, including full and partial
- Driver's license and other identification numbers
- Citizenship, legal status, gender, race and ethnicity
- Birth date and place of birth;
- Home telephone and personal cell phone numbers
- Personal email addresses
- Mailing and home addresses
- Religious preference
- Security clearance
- Mother's middle and maiden names
- Spouse information and marital status
- Dependent and child information
- Emergency contact information
- Biometrics
- Financial information
- Medical and disability information
- Law enforcement information
- Employment information
- Educational information
- Military records



# Aufderheide takes command of 72nd ARS

By Staff Sgt.  
Andrew McLaughlin  
Public Affairs staff

With the passing of a guidon, a new leader took charge of one of Grissom's aerial refueling units.

Lt. Col. Erik Aufderheide assumed command of the 72nd Air Refueling Squadron during a ceremony here June 1.

Aufderheide replaced Lt. Col. Doug Gullion, who took command of the 434th Operations Support Squadron that same day.

Fellow Airmen, family, friends and past mentors came to witness the ceremony and congratulate the new commander, who has been with the 72nd ARS since 2005.

"This is the finest unit I've ever been in," said Aufderheide. "It's got the best people and the best equipment."

He said his vision for the squadron is to stay just that -- the best.

Aufderheide talked about the importance of Airmen balancing their military responsibilities with family and civilian life and emphasized that a healthy balance allows them to be more effective at their jobs and enjoy their time Grissom.

He also spoke of the importance of being a citizen Airman in regards to contributing to society and defending the nation.

"We should feel good about



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

Lt. Col. Erik Aufderheide, 72nd Air Refueling Squadron commander, receives the unit guidon from Col. Christopher Amend, 434th Operations Group commander during a change of command ceremony here June 1. Aufderheide replaced Lt. Col. Douglas Gullion as the new 72nd ARS commander.

fighting the enemy," he said.

Among those in attendance were his son, Leif and fiancé, Melinda Brown.

During the ceremony, Aufderheide told his son that he serves in the military because he loves his family and then embraced him and gave him a 72nd ARS unit coin.

He also humorously recalled the time he asked his fiancé out for their first date, and said how nervous he was at the time.

He then went on to thank his mentors for the guidance and

support they gave him, especially during his days in pilot training.

Col. Christopher Amend, 434th Operations Group commander, who presided over the ceremony, said he has high hopes for the new commander.

"I look forward to him taking the 72nd to new heights," said Amend.

Aufderheide entered the regular Air Force after graduating from Indiana University in 1994. He has deployed in support of Operations Northern Watch, Southern Watch and New Dawn.

## Thirteen Grissom Airmen awarded medals for service

By Staff Sgt. Ben Mota  
Public Affairs staff

For their meritorious service in the U.S. Air Force, 13 Grissom Airmen were recently awarded medals.

### Meritorious Service Medal

-- Lt. Col. Daniel Harrison, 434th Mission Support Group; Maj. Kelly Howard, 434th Air Refueling Wing; Maj. David Wilkins, 434th Aerospace Medicine Squadron; Senior Master Sgt. James Eliason, 434th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron; Master Sgt. Timothy Hill,

434th AMDS; Master Sgt. Ethan Minor, 434th Logistics Readiness Squadron; Master Sgt. Harold Peete, 434th LRS; Master Sgt. Douglas Preece, 74th Air Refueling Squadron; Master Sgt. Geoffrey Spaulding, 434th Maintenance Operations Flight; Master Sgt. Kerry Vanausdall, 72nd Air Refueling Squadron

**Air Medal** -- Capt. Jacob L. Creel, 72nd ARS

**Air Force Commendation Medal** -- Capt. Leesa Lowder, 434th AMDS; Staff Sgt. Zachary Miles, 434th Maintenance Squadron



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

# Gullion takes command of 434th OSS

By Staff Sgt.  
**Andrew McLaughlin**  
*Public Affairs staff*

Airmen, family and friends gathered to witness the transfer of authority of one of Grissom's units from one officer to another in a long-held tradition.

Lt. Col. Douglas Gullion took command of the 434th Operations Support Squadron during a ceremony here June 1.

Gullion replaced Col. Larry Shaw, who moved on to become the 927th Operations Group commander at MacDill Air Force Base, Fla.

Col. Christopher Amend, 434th Operations Group commander, presided over the ceremony and said Gullion will bring with him the experience and the enthusiasm needed to do the job.

"He brings an insight and attitude of embracing change in the Air Force,"



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

**Lt. Col. Douglas Gullion, 434th Operations Support Squadron commander, receives the unit guidon from Col. Christopher Amend, 434th Operations Group commander, during a change of command ceremony here June 1. Gullion replaced Lt. Col. Larry Shaw as the new 434th OSS commander.**

Amend continued.

Prior to taking command of the 434th OSS, Gullion held numerous leadership positions, serving as the 72nd Air Refueling Squadron director of operations and acting as the unit's commander.

Gullion graduated from Purdue University in

1983 and began his Air Force career in 1987. The following year he began pilot training served with both the 72nd ARS and the 74th Air Refueling Squadron in various positions.

"It was a tremendous experience," he said of this time with the squadrons, taking time

to explain the friendly rivalry between the two aerial refueling units.

Looking ahead, Gullion said he is excited to take on his new position and the responsibilities that come with it.

"I look forward to the challenge ahead and building relationships," he continued.

He also spoke of challenges facing Air Force reservists today and encouraged fellow Airmen to find balance between their military service, civilian jobs and family life.

In that same light, Gullion took the time to thank his wife Pam and their three children for their support throughout his career.

Gullion is a command pilot with more than 6,000 flight hours and has deployed in support of Operations Desert Shield, Desert Storm, Allied Force, Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom.

## Prowler fuel

A 434th Air Refueling Wing KC-135R Stratotanker from Grissom Air Reserve Base, Ind., refuels a U.S. Navy EA-6B Prowler assigned to the Patriots of Electronic Attack Squadron (VAQ) 140, embarked aboard the aircraft carrier USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN 69), during a mission over Southwest Asia. Aircrew and aircraft from the 434th ARW were deployed to the region in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.



*U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Courtney Storey*



# Grissom JAG receives Donald C. Rasher award

By Staff Sgt. Carl Berry  
Public Affairs staff

Former South African President Nelson Mandela once said, "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world," and wielding such a weapon has earned one Grissom Airman top-level recognition.

Lt. Col. Stephen McManus, 434th Air Refueling Wing staff judge advocate, was recently awarded the Donald C. Rasher Award for his outstanding contributions to the Air Force Judge Advocate General Corps.

"The award recognizes the Air Reserve Component attorney who contributed the most to the education and training of the JAG Corps during the year," said Col. Kenneth Theurer, The Judge Advocate General's School commandant.

One of McManus' major contributions to education in the last year came from his tenure as a director of the Training by Reservists in Advocacy and Litigation Skills, or TRIALS, program.

Serving as director for more than five years, he led a team of 25 staff judge advocates in managing the two-and-a-half day program that provided training to newly appointed staff judge advocates through student exercises in pretrial preparation, motion practice, jury selection, direct and cross examination of witnesses, proper handling of evidence, and closing arguments.

His approach fosters cohesion in training and skills between the active duty and Air Reserve Component communities, said Col. Don Buckley, 434th ARW commander.

McManus said running the program was no simple task as his team members live in different areas around the country and have different civilian responsibilities.

"I have to coordinate the training through correspondence and a lot of the planning is done after we have completed a full day at our civilian jobs," he added.

Despite the challenges, under McManus' direction, the program ex-



U.S. Air Force photo

Lt. Col. Stephen McManus

panded beyond its Air Force roots.

"In the last few years we have seen the program evolve from training only Air Force SJAs to training attorneys that work in the Department of Justice, Department of Defense and other branches of the military," said McManus. "In 2012, we trained 148 people."

The value of the training and his hard work has not gone unnoticed by McManus' peers and students.

"I have gone through the program two times, and I have learned practical litigation and advocacy skills," shared Capt. Mary Wood, Area Defense Counsel at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio. "The program enables active JAG members to tap into the unique skills, breadth of knowledge and wisdom of reservists."

"One of the best parts about the program is that you are videotaped throughout the program, so you are able to correct mannerisms or mistakes on your own," continued Wood. "I believe you have to see yourself perform so that you are able to improve your craft."

Not only did the program help improve JAGs' skills, McManus also worked to ensure the training counted toward continuing education requirements needed by many attorneys to maintain their licenses.

Though his award recognizes his

personal accomplishments, especially with the TRIALS program, McManus said his success was due, in large part, to his teammates.

"After five years of running the program it is an honor to be selected for this award," he said. "The TRIALS program would not have been a success if it were not for all the great team members."

And, while his directorship of the TRIALS program was a hallmark of his award, McManus' nomination package also included several other notable contributions he has made as the 434th ARW SJA.

Over the last year, McManus trained 434th ARW leadership and made himself available to them, even off duty, so commanders, chiefs and first sergeants could reach out to him for timely advice.

He ensured leaders were up-to-date and ready to 'answer the bell' at a moment's notice with his proactive training methods, said Buckley. He took every occasion to train the Grissom community...and went above and beyond to ensure wing members were equipped to deploy and focus on the mission when needed, he added.

In that role, McManus prepared a handout for deploying reservists on new, 4-percent mortgage rate reductions; briefed the entire wing on Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act and Servicemember's Civil Relief Act protections in preparation for deployments; and researched and drafted a pamphlet for Airmen on pro bono legal services available in numerous surrounding states.

And, as head of the only reserve legal office on Grissom, McManus provided deployment readiness and military justice advice for the base's Army Reserve and Marine Corps Reserve units.

"The Rasher Award is tailor-made for Stephen McManus," said Buckley. "He is the consummate ARC trainer, educator, and mentor."

The Rasher Award is named after Col. Donald Rasher who served as The JAG School commandant from 1986 until 1991.



# Aerial port keeps the force moving

By Staff Sgt.  
Andrew McLaughlin  
Public Affairs staff

Throughout history, transportation of supplies and equipment has played an important role in the success of military missions.

With this in mind, Airmen of Grissom's 49th Aerial Port Flight were hard at work making sure important cargo got where it needed to go during training aimed at keeping them proficient at transporting and loading cargo onto KC-135R Stratotankers here recently.

During the training, aerial port Airmen met with KC-135 aircrew as they inspected the cargo and went through the process of transporting it to the aircraft properly. Once there, the aircrew, who perform the duties of loadmasters, directed the loading of the cargo.

"It gets everybody involved and working together," said Staff Sgt. Jennifer Harper, 49th

Aerial Port Flight aerial port apprentice.

Aerial port is responsible for building cargo pallets, transporting cargo to aircraft, and the planning and logistics involved in the process. While deployed overseas, they also handle passenger transportation.

Staff Sgt. James Jack-



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

Staff Sgt. James Jackson, 49th Aerial Port Flight aerial port journeyman, briefs Tech. Sgt. Jessie Rood, 434th Operations Support Squadron boom operator, and Staff Sgt. Clayton Duncan, 72nd Air Refueling Squadron boom operator, during cargo loading training here April 13. The purpose of the training was to keep aerial port Airmen proficient at transporting and loading cargo onto KC-135R Stratotankers and also allow aircrew to observe the process.

son, 49th APF aerial port journeyman, who participated in the training, briefed the aircrew on what cargo they had, where it was going and any safety concerns involved.

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*"If we don't  
move cargo,  
troops down  
range won't get  
their gear."*

---

- Staff Sgt. Jennifer Harper

Jackson noted that some aircrew are not very familiar with the APF outside the flight line, and that this training allowed them to see where and how the cargo is prepared before it reaches the Stratotanker.

"This is a good opportunity to work with the

aircrew and help them understand what we do," said Jackson. "We practice going through the process and answer the aircrew's questions."

Although aerial port is responsible for building and transporting the cargo, the aircrew must verify it meets the proper standards before it's loaded onboard.

"The aircrew has final say on what is loaded," said Jackson.

Usually the aircrew inspects the cargo and paperwork when it arrives at the aircraft, said Jackson. In the training, they can inspect the cargo at the source and provide feedback to the aerial port team.

"In the preload inspection, we look for hazardous material, issues with

the pallets and any safety concerns," said Master Sgt. Tim Stibbe, 74th Air Refueling Squadron assistant chief boom operator, who was one of the aircrew inspecting and measuring cargo.

Stibbe said that loading cargo onto a Stratotanker, which is primarily used for in-flight refueling, is different from other aircraft that are designed specifically for cargo and passenger transportation.

"The size and weight of the pallets have to be specifically built for the KC-135," he said.

Harper summed up the importance of the APF mission and how it affects the military at large.

"If we don't move cargo, troops down range won't get their gear," she concluded.



# Civil engineer project provides training, helps SFS



*U.S. Air Force photos by Staff Sgt. Andrew McLaughlin*

**Senior Airmen Phillip Steffen and Dustin Fullerton, 434th Civil Engineer Squadron structural journeymen, complete work on a new observation tower overlooking an M203 grenade launcher range here May 5.**

**By Staff Sgt.  
Andrew McLaughlin**  
*Public Affairs staff*

With the striking of hammers and the buzzing of saws, Grissom civil engineers added a towering new structure and capability to the base.

Members of the 434th Civil Engineer Squadron finished a new observation tower overlooking the M203 grenade launcher range here May 5.

“It’s a proficiency range to get people trained up,” said Master Sgt. Kevin Stath, 434th CES structural craftsman.

The tower allows 434th Security Force Squadron instructors to watch over and observe their Airmen training on the range, said Stath.

The civil engineers finished up the tower by installing protective outer layers to the observation room as well as gutters with down spouts and floor tiling.

“This makes it all-weather proof,” Stath explained.

Some Airmen at Grissom may not be aware of the grenade launcher range on base due to a lack of explosive sounds one might expect to hear from such training, and Stath said that’s because live grenade rounds are not used on the range. Instead SFS members use dummy rounds filled with powder.

Besides fulfilling the requirement of having such a tower, the project provided the 434th CES practice for many of the construction processes that Grissom civil engineers need to know.

“It gave us a lot of hands-on training for our careerfield,” said Stath.

In all, the tower project provided valuable experience for Grissom’s civil engineers by allowing them to put their skills to work, and it will also help facilitate training for security forces who are charged with keeping the base safe.



**Senior Airman Dustin Fullerton adds a protective covering to the outside of an observation tower overlooking an M203 grenade launcher range here at Grissom as Senior Airmen Phillip Steffen and Eric Griffin assist him May 5.**



# ■ Grissom announces Airman Promotions

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

**By Tech. Sgt. Mark Orders-Woempner**  
*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:**  
- Kent Hinshaw, 434th Civil Engineering Squadron  
- Michael Holmes, 434th Communications Squadron

**To technical sergeant:**  
- Marlon Calma, 434th Security Forces Squadron  
- McKayla Dick, 434th

Operations Support Squadron  
- Caleb Turner, 434th Maintenance Operations Flight

**To staff sergeant:**  
- Kellin Hardin, 434th OSS  
- Thomas Lennon, 434th CES  
- Andrew McLaughlin,

434th Air Refueling Wing

**To senior airman:**  
- Latoya Beverly, 434th CES  
- Ryan Galvez, 434th Logistics Readiness Squadron  
- Sharrie Jones, 434th LRS  
- Jasmine Woodfork, 434th CES

## KC-46 tanker assembly begins

WRIGHT-PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Ohio -- Boeing's announcement that they have begun assembly of the first KC-46 wing spar is a significant event for the Air Force tanker program.

It marks the start of assembly of the first KC-46 Engineering and Manufacturing Development aircraft.

"We are excited and pleased that KC-46 fabrication

has begun. The Boeing team continues to make significant progress in the development of the Air Force's next tanker," said Maj. Gen. John Thompson, program executive officer for tankers at the Air Force Life Cycle Management Center. "The development effort is on track, detailed test planning is making good progress, and initial beddown, training and sustainment planning is underway."

The Air Force is about a third of the way into the KC-46 tanker development program. The Air Force contracted with Boeing in February 2011 to acquire 179 KC-46 Tankers to begin recapitalizing the more than 50-year-old KC-135 fleet. The initial delivery target is for 18 tankers by 2017. Production will then ramp up to deliver all 179 tankers by 2028.

The aircraft being produced at the Boeing factory in Everett, Washington is a commercial derivative design based on the Boeing 767-200ER passenger aircraft. When the aircraft comes off the Everett production line, it will be a 767-2C Provisioned Freighter that will eventually become a military-configured KC-46 tanker.

The first fully equipped KC-46 is slated to fly in early 2015. (AFNS)



*U.S. Air Force illustration*

A KC-46 conducts in-flight refueling on a B-2 bomber in this illustration. The first KC-46 is expected to fly in 2015.