

## Want to comment?

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## Refreshing spirit

Your article in the November 2003 issue ["Same Stuff, Fresh Way of Thinking"] about Tech. Sgt. Randall Lovett is one of the best I've read in Airman. His enthusiasm and motivated approach to performing a job that most view as thankless is refreshing and inspiring. The selflessness, service and sacrifice exhibited in his daily duties are traits all of us should emulate. His infectious spirit aptly reflects the phrase, "It's not what you do, but who you are."

Maj. Michael Kleiman  
Kirtland Air Force Base, N.M.

## Slightly off target

Your article on gunners ["The Big Guns," November 2003] was an excellent overview, but omitted one notable achievement — B-52 gunners were able to help put bombs on target.

When a plane lost its radar, the lead plane's gunner would provide range and bearing information to help keep the aircraft with the bad radar in posi-

tion. Gunners would call out the distance in yards when the bomb-release 'hack' was called out. The navigation team in the following bomber would start a stopwatch on the 'hack,' check a table for what delay to use for the following distance called out by the gunner, and release its bombs.

True, the gunner was there to defend against MiGs, but he was also there as an integral member of the crew — watching for landmarks during low-level navigation, helping in breakaway maneuvers during refueling and keeping track of other aircraft in the formation.

retired Capt. Fred Wagner  
via e-mail

## Nit-picking?

I was reading "Air Mail" [December 2003] and noticed that four letters were from people who said they were sick of others making observations concerning improper wear of the uniform or misfolding the flag.

I may not have that much experience, but if I remember correctly, I was trained to uphold the three core values of the Air Force. Those people who are pointing out the mistakes are doing it to ensure younger troops, like myself, don't make the same mistakes. Telling them to do otherwise and to "give everyone else a break" promotes the idea that we should keep our mouths shut and not point out the mistakes people make.

Promoting that type of attitude, even with small issues like uniform wear, can lead to a breakdown in general military discipline and lead to bigger mistakes when the stakes are higher.

Senior Airman Christopher Humphrey  
Grand Forks Air Force Base, N.D.

## Commissioning opportunity

I found your article "Trading Stripes for Bars" [December 2003] to be very informative and well done. However, the Air National Guard Academy of Military Science is absent from the list of commissioning programs.

This is another commissioning opportunity active duty people can look to if they plan to separate but still want to maintain their military affiliation and expand their careers. I recently traded my staff sergeant stripes for bars and am now a member of the Washington Air National Guard. All but a handful of my classmates had prior enlisted active duty service behind them.

2nd Lt. James Barnett  
Geiger Field Air National Guard Base, Wash.

## Behind the scenes

Your article in the November 2003 issue ["The Sight Savors"] was very compelling. Thank you for publicizing the hard work our Air Force professionals accomplish in such austere conditions. I'm afraid, though, the article suffered an omission that should be addressed.

The monumental task of organizing and executing one of these missions is borne by the medical plans and operations branch of the 612th Support Squadron at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz. The unit is part of the 612th Theater Operations Group at 12th Air Force. The branch is manned by five medical professionals who

source the missions, secure funding, assign individual units to different medical readiness training exercises, work country and diplomatic clearances, schedule missions, conduct site surveys and ensure the teams are properly protected, fed, supplied and housed.

The trip profiled was just one of nearly 40 the team planned during fiscal 2003. More than 150,000 patients were treated last year thanks to the Herculean efforts of those five professionals.

Lt. Col. Sid Mayeux  
Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz.

## Thanks for service

My father served in the Air Force during World War II. I appreciate all the Air Force does to protect our country and its citizens from any evil that may come. I enjoy reading all the articles in Airman. They are appreciated very much.

Fisher Gordon  
via e-mail

## Correction

Senior Airman Nathan Summers' home of record is Kearney, Neb. ["12 Outstanding Airman of 2003," January 2004], and he is assigned to Air Mobility Command.

## What's your opinion?

With the launch of the new superlative on fitness standards by Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. John Jumper and Secretary of the Air Force Dr. James Roche, Air Force units are focusing their attention on the health and welfare of their service members. Many new programs are being introduced to help shape up people and turn them into airmen who are "fit to fight."

What kind of impact do you think the new fitness standards are making on the Air Force? Send comments to editor@afnews.af.mil.

To view the new fitness standards, visit Air Force Link at [www.af.mil/news/USAF\\_Fitness\\_Charts.pdf](http://www.af.mil/news/USAF_Fitness_Charts.pdf).

## Meet the Staff



Tech. Sgt. **Orville F. Desjarlais Jr.** is a 20-year veteran from Billings, Mont., whose previous assignments took him to Oklahoma, Japan, California, Guam and New Hampshire. As a senior staff writer for Airman, he covers stories concerning space, religion, operations and environmental issues, as well as happenings in Air Combat Command, Air Force Space Command and Pacific Air Forces. If you have story ideas in any of those areas, give him a call at (210) 925-7757 or DSN 945-7757, or drop him an e-mail at [orville.desjarlais@afnews.af.mil](mailto:orville.desjarlais@afnews.af.mil).

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## On target

I'd like to thank Master Sgts. Tammy Cournoyer and Scott Wagers for putting together an on-target article about another aspect of our "future force" ["A Fur-footed Force," December 2003].

The K-9 units are among the unsung heroes that help keep me safe to do my job. I volunteered to be a security forces augmentee at Prince Sultan Air Base, Saudi Arabia, shortly after the bombing of the USS Cole. It was a chance to actually see the defenses I took for granted — K-9s sniffing through vendors' vehicles. Kudos to Lisa Smith and her teams for raising the bar on how the Air Force should "take care of our own" no matter how many feet they have.

Staff Sgt. Sean Knott  
Langley Air Force Base, Va.

The Best of Jake

"JAKE" SCHOFFER



"OK, folks, today we tour the highly classified, top secret areas of our Defense Department."