

Each year the Airman magazine staff begins months of research and coordination to publish its annual almanac edition known as "The Book." The edition has quickly become the most popular issue Airman publishes. This year the magazine printed more than 350,000 copies of The Book 2004 — 100,000 more copies than the previous year.

With such a demand for the issue, the staff realizes the importance of making it as accurate as possible. That's why Airman works closely with all major commands, direct reporting units and other offices at the Pentagon and the Air Force Personnel Center to coordinate and approve all the information before publication.

Unfortunately, the number of areas this issue encompasses makes it difficult to produce an error-free publication. Therefore, we also rely on the feedback of our readers to help improve the edition. Here are some comments on The Book 2004.

I find the January 2004 edition very informative. I'm going to keep a copy at my desk as it really puts the worldwide mission of the Air Force in perspective.

As a data type of person, I have a question about Page 36 where it lists the racial breakdown of the active duty force. It doesn't list Hispanic as a category. Is this an oversight, or is the Hispanic active duty population in the 6.5 percent not identified in the chart?

Chris Neville
Peterson Air Force Base, Colo.

As you noticed, the chart in the "Personnel Facts" is a racial — not an ethnic — breakdown. In previous years, Airman magazine used a graph labeled "Ethnic Breakdown" with a pie chart broken down by Caucasian, Black, Hispanic and Other.

You may not know that the Air Force changed its race codes last year. One of the main changes is that "Hispanic" is not a race but an ethnic designator, e.g., you can be "White" or "Black" and still be Hispanic. The way we presented the data is the way the Military Equal Opportunity Assessment is delivered to the Office of the Secretary of Defense (with race being defined as American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian, Black, Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander or White).

I find it incredulous that the Air Force would publish a magazine with all its locations, armament, strength, etc., for public knowledge. What ever happened to operational security? Especially in today's environment, you'd think we'd keep that to ourselves. I'm a training manager and forever preach that, and here we go putting all our stuff on the street.

Mike Junghann
Hurlburt Field, Fla.

This is the most helpful Air Force publication that I've run across in our 11 years in the military. I enjoy reading your monthly editions, but I've never picked up your yearly edition until this month. I was quite surprised at how encompassing the publication is with the scope and mission of the service.

I especially like the weapons section. Now I'll be able to name those planes as quickly as my active duty husband. Good job!

Marsha Vyverberg
Bitburg, Germany

I think there's a mistake on Page 47 of The Book 2004 where it lists the F-15A/B/C/D Eagle and F-16C/D Fighting Falcon.

The F-15 inventory reads "F-15A, seven; F-15B, 15; F-16C, 590." Should this read "F-15C, 590?"

The F-16 inventory also reflects

"F-16C, 590." Can you please clarify? Senior Master Sgt. Leighton Chang
Langley Air Force Base, Va.

The F-15C inventory should've been 331. The F-16C number is correct at 590.

On Page 20 of the Air National Guard section, the 120th Fighter Wing is listed with F-16 A/B aircraft. We actually have F-16 C/D aircraft.

Maj. Tim Lincoln
Great Falls International Airport, Mont.

On the last page, it lists all the tail markings and aircraft for the different states. You incorrectly listed the 129th Rescue Wing at Moffett Federal Airfield as having HC-130P's. We actually have the MC-130P model.

Capt. Timothy Perez
Moffett Federal Airfield, Calif.

I'd like to personally thank Master Sgt. Scott Wagers for his incredible photo on the cover of the January 2004 issue. What a way to start off the year! I have to say, this model Airman's perfectly sculpted triceps were just the inspiration I needed to get my own exercise routine stepped up a notch, and I've stuck with it since I received January's magazine. I work in a joint environment, and women across the board appreciate this photo. Girl-ish giggles aside, many thanks for the professional quality photo that renders the tough warfighter solidity that the Air Force is striving to achieve.

Senior Airman Amanda Kean
Fort George G. Meade, Md.

Was there a reason why the 119th Fighter Wing from North Dakota wasn't mentioned in the aircraft tail markings on Page 64? I would've thought that with the reputation the "Happy Hooligans" have, they wouldn't have been overlooked.

Master Sgt. Dan Collins
Moffett Federal Airfield, Calif.

The tail marking for the 119th Fighter Wing, Hector International Airport, N.D., has two elements. The large block letters "ND" are centered on the vertical stabilizer with a red tail band and the words "Happy Hooligans" surrounded

by a narrow white border at the top.

On Page 40 there's a Good Conduct Medal clasp pictured, but the only guidance I can find for its wear says it's only authorized for Army people. If this is so, why is it pictured there?

Tech. Sgt. James Albright Jr.
Bolling Air Force Base, Washington, D.C.

You're correct; the Good Conduct Medal clasp is worn on the Army Good Conduct Medal. It's included in the magazine because there are Air Force members who were awarded the medal and clasp when they were part of the Army Air Forces. If you look at some of the other devices, such as the plane device, you can see that they have a similar history. You may also notice some retired Air Force members wearing these devices on their uniforms.

The 939th Rescue Wing at Portland International Airport, Ore., listed on Page 9 converted to a refueling wing. The unit also switched from 10th Air Force to 4th Air Force during the conversion. As a result, the 939th Air Refueling Wing no longer has HC-130P's and HH-60G's. It now has KC-135s.

Maj. Karen Magnus
Portland International Airport, Ore.

I was looking through the weapons section and was amazed by a couple of omissions. First, you left out one of the most important cornerstones of most any combat engagement we've had for the last 30 years. I couldn't find any mention of the AC-130H/U Gunship! Second, the tail marking LK was left out. I think the largest C-130 wing in the world, the 314th Airlift Wing at Little Rock Air Force Base, Ark., deserves some acknowledgement. I truly expected complete coverage from Airman, but even the better magazines can't get it all correct.

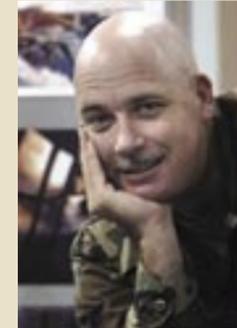
Tech. Sgt. Peter Seidel
Little Rock Air Force Base, Ark.

The AC-130H/U Gunship is listed on Page 49 in the Attack, Observation and Battle Management section. We will work closely with Air Education and Training Command to avoid leaving out the 314th in future issues.

Meet the Staff

Tech. Sgt. Mark Kinkade is a 20-year veteran from El Paso, Texas, whose previous assignments include Texas, California and a four-year stint with the European Stars and Stripes in Germany. As a senior staff writer, he covers stories concerning medical programs, quality of life issues and technology development, as well as happenings in Air Force field operating agencies and direct reporting units. 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 email at mark.kinkade@afnews.af.mil.

by Master Sgt. Efrain Gonzalez



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