



MAGAZINE OF THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

Airman

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MARCH-APRIL 2009



RE-INVIGORATING THE
NUCLEAR ENTERPRISE

U.S. Air Force Celebrates Month of the Military



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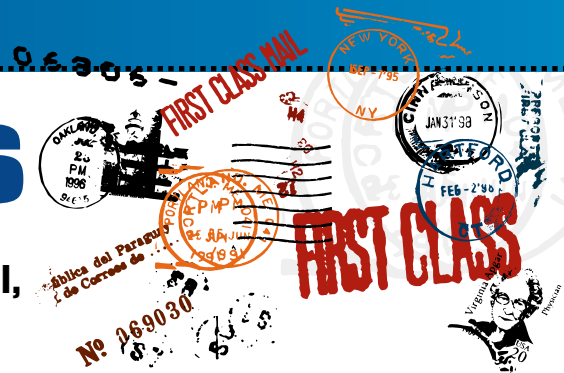
On the Cover

Staff Sgt. Cody Womack (front) and Senior Airman Rachel Gamertsfelder-Doane provide safety and security for America's Air Force — Defending the Force anytime, anywhere.

photo illustration and design
by G. Patrick Harris
imagery support
by Lance Cheung

COMMENTS

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Educationally yours,
Tech. Sgt. Brian S. Raymond,
U.S. Air Force Academy, Colo.

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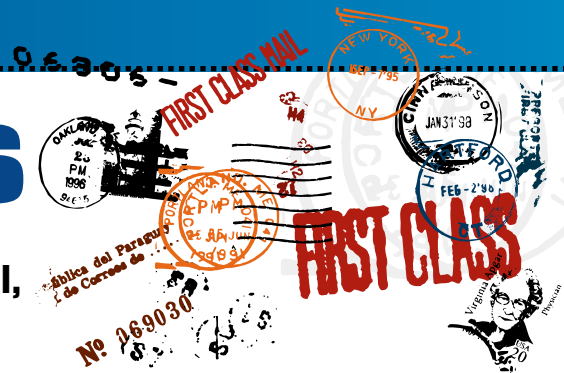
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Frontline Duty

AIRMEN SPREAD AIRPOWER AROUND THE GLOBE

Around the world, the dedicated men and women of America's Air Force are demonstrating airpower to allies and enemies alike.

Whether flying F-15E Strike Eagles over the hard-packed terrain of Afghanistan or the Air Force Honor Guard demonstrating precision and training on the hardwood courts of the National Basketball Association, all eyes are focused on Airmen.

More than 500,000 of America's finest men and women are proudly serving as part of a total force made up of active duty, Air National Guard, and Air Force Reserve — spreading Integrity, Service and Excellence around the world.

Because today's combat-proven Airmen play such a vital role in the Air Force's overall success, it is not hard to find Airmen safeguarding air, space and cyberspace, anytime, anywhere.

—Airman staff

FIRING FLARES

photo by STAFF SGT. AARON ALLMON

An F-15E Strike

Eagle from the 391st
Expeditionary Fighter

Squadron, Bagram Air Base, deploys heat decoys during a combat patrol in Afghanistan.





Ⓢ STRIKE OUT Staff Sgt. Nathan Depew and Senior Airman Ronald Colletti call in air support during urban mount training in Germany in support of Exercise Allied Strike II, a combined coalition forces exercise training for Joint Terminal Attack Control controllers.

photo by STAFF SGT. SARAYUTH PINTHONG



Ⓢ WATCH TOWER The setting sun silhouettes the air traffic control tower at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. The 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing at Balad runs the tower and is a forward-deployed Air Force wing in support Operation Iraqi Freedom. The 332nd AEW is the home unit of the famous 332nd Fighter Group "Tuskegee Airmen."

photo by TECH. SGT. ERIK GUDMUNDSON



Ⓢ CASUALTY CARE Airman 1st Class Jonathan Guzman (right) attaches tape to Army Spc. Jeremy Gary's head as part of a combat lifesaver course on Joint Base Balad, Iraq. The Army, Air Force and Navy used a mass casualty exercise as the final training scenario for the joint CLS course. Airman Guzman, a security forces apprentice with the 532nd Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron, is deployed from Lackland Air Force Base, Texas. Specialist Gary, a joint node network operator maintainer, is assigned to the 51st Expeditionary Signal Battalion, deployed from Fort Lewis, Wash.

photo by AIRMAN 1ST CLASS JASON EPLEY



PRAYER POWER

photo by NAVY PETTY OFFICER 2ND CLASS TODD FRANTOM

Airmen assigned to Det. 3, 732nd

Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron, Multi-National Division - Baghdad group together for a prayer. The prayer is a tradition for the Airmen, prior to heading out on their daily Police Transition Team missions in Baghdad where they partner with the Army.



INTERCEPTOR ENROUTE

photo by JOE DAVILA

A ground-based interceptor lifts off from Vandenberg Air Force Base, Calif.

The launch was a test of the Ground-based Mid-course Defense element of the Ballistic Missile Defense System. The missile successfully intercepted a long-range target launched from Kodiak, Alaska.



WAITING Warbird

photo by TECH. SGT. ERIK GUDMUNDSON

An F-16 Fighting Falcon sits tethered to the hot cargo pad in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. The aircraft, with the Minnesota Air National Guard's 179th Fighter Squadron, is tethered to secure it prior to a full after-burner engine run-up test.



REFLECTIONS

photo by AIRMAN 1ST CLASS JASON EPLEY

A C-17 Globemaster III taxis on the runway after landing. The aircraft is reflected in a body of water created by

a recent flood at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. Stagnant bodies of water can become breeding grounds for mosquitoes that carry infectious diseases. The 332nd Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron there pumps water out of living areas and is building new retention ponds to minimize mosquito outbreaks. The C-17 is deployed from McGuire Air Force Base, N.J.



EXHIBITION OF EXCELLENCE

photo by STAFF SGT. RAYMOND HOY

The Air Force Honor Guard drill team performs during a nationally telecast Chicago Bulls and Los Angeles Lakers basketball game in front of nearly 20,000 fans in Los Angeles.

PREDATOR POWER

photo by SENIOR AIRMAN BRIAN YBARBO

Staff Sgt. Bobby Domanski and Airman 1st Class Aaron Weddington lift a Hellfire missile for loading onto an MQ-1 Predator during the 432nd Wing's weapons load crew competition. This was the first weapons load competition since the 432nd Wing was activated at Creech Air Force Base, Nev., in May 2007.





SHUTTLE SECURITY Senior Airman Gary Nygard secures a gateway near the Space Shuttle Endeavour at Barksdale Air Force Base, La. The Space Shuttle Endeavor, atop a National Aeronautic and Space Administration's modified Boeing 747, arrived at Barksdale AFB during its transfer from Edwards Air Force Base, Calif., to its Cape Canaveral, Fla., destination.

photo by LANCE CHEUNG



JUMPER AWAY Army Soldiers jump out the troop door of a C-17 Globemaster III. The 4th Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division partnered with the 517th Airlift Squadron at Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska, for jump training prior to their deployment. More than 1,200 Soldiers jumped out of C-17 Globemaster IIIs during the week-long training.

photo by SENIOR AIRMAN JONATHAN STEFFEN



Airmen are first and foremost Americans. These proud patriots pride in protecting their nation and performing their sacred duty as American citizens.

In January, Airmen joined Soldiers, Sailors and Marines from their sister services in a unique capacity where they all served their country and supported the foundations of liberty and freedom providing assistance to the presidential inauguration.

From the Air Force Honor Guard to the individual Airman volunteering his or her off-duty time, America's Airmen led the way in upholding a military tradition that dates back to the first inauguration in 1789 of George Washington, the country's first commander in chief.

These Airmen — these Americans — operated tirelessly and professionally both behind the scenes and in the spotlight to help make this distinctive event a success, demonstrating to their new commander in chief and the citizens who they serve at home and on battlefields around the world that they are truly among America's finest.

— Airman staff



INAUGU

A photograph of President Barack Obama waving to the crowd. He is wearing a dark suit, a white shirt, and a red patterned tie. His right hand is raised high, palm facing forward. The background is a blurred crowd of people.

President Barack Obama waves to the crowd at the conclusion of his inaugural address in Washington, D.C. Hundreds of Airmen supported this year's presidential inauguration, upholding a more than 200-year-old military tradition. President Obama is the 44th President of the United States.

RATION

photo by Army 1st Sgt Robert Hyatt



President Barack Obama, Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Norton Schwartz and Vice President Joe Biden salute a military color guard as it passes the reviewing stand during the 2009 presidential inaugural parade in Washington, D.C. In addition to the thousands of men and women in uniform who provided military ceremonial support and security to the inauguration, many attended inauguration events on their own time.



photo by Master Sgt. Thomas Meneguini



Crowds gathered on the National Mall during the 56th Presidential Inauguration in Washington, D.C. More than 5,000 men and women in uniform provided military ceremonial support to the presidential inauguration. While no official count was taken, the National Park Service estimates that more than 1.8 million people attended the inauguration of the 44th President, Barack Obama.

photo by Army Spc. Gavriel Bartzur



Participants in the 2009 Presidential Inaugural Parade rehearsal make their way down Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, D.C. More than 5,000 men and women in uniform provided military ceremonial support to the presidential inauguration. Military members also provided support to inauguration security, the National Mall and inaugural parade.

photo by Tech. Sgt. Suzanne M. Day



Members of the Joint Honor Cordon wait for the rehearsal of the 56th Presidential Inauguration to begin in Washington, D.C. They carried on a tradition, which dates back more than 200 years, of honoring the new commander in chief by providing military ceremonial support to his inauguration.

photo by Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Daniel J. Calderon



Airmen in the 56th Presidential Inauguration rehearse in Washington, D.C. More than 5,000 men and women in uniform provided military ceremonial support to the presidential inauguration, security, crowd control and the inaugural parade.

photo by Master Sgt. Cecilio Ricardo



The Air Force Honor Guard rehearses parade movements in preparation for the 56th Presidential Inauguration in Washington, D.C. It is estimated that more than 37 million television viewers tuned in to watch the presidential inauguration.

AIR FORCE



NEW COURSE TEACHES AIRMEN THE BASICS OF UAS OPERATIONS

STORY BY STAFF SGT. MATTHEW BATES

DESIGN BY LUKE BORLAND

The Air Force is now offering a new UFC course. But, put down those gloves and forget taping those wrists. In this case, UFC doesn't mean they tossed their hats into the Ultimate Fighting Championship arena.

Here, UFC is actually an acronym for a new course at Randolph Air Force Base, Texas, which teaches Air Force officers the basics of unmanned aircraft systems operations. Called the UAS Fundamentals Course, the 21-day training program is designed to give students an overview and their first hands-on training through 100 hours of combined simulator and academic classes on how to maneuver and employ the unmanned aircraft.

"It simulates the real-world ground combat and air combat environment for UFC students," said Lt. Col. Scott Cardozo, the 563rd Flying Training Squadron director of operations.

The course is important because unmanned aircraft systems are taking on an increasing role in Air Force operations around the world. Graduates of the course learn how the systems fit into the bigger picture of the joint fight and the capabilities, communications and other aspects of aircraft such as the MQ-1 Predator and MQ-9 Reaper. Graduates from UFC also gain valuable "stick time" at the controls and practice using targeting pods on simulators.

"They'll be flying 'real' missions soon after leaving here."

— Lt. Col. Scott Cardozo

Once referred to as unmanned aerial vehicles, or UAVs, the definition and nomenclature used today is UAS, or unmanned aircraft systems, which reflects the fact that ground stations and other elements along with the aircraft make up the overall system.

"The UAS program is definitely on the fast track," said Capt. Tom Moore, 563rd FTS UFC flight commander.

Fast is right. Since the Predator was first used in the Balkans in 1995, the number and types of unmanned aircraft have increased at a rapid pace. Today, these aircraft are used for a variety of operations, including reconnaissance, research and precision strike missions. This flexibility, combined with their efficient operating costs, makes unmanned aircraft a viable option for commanders on the ground.

Lieutenants Jason Ruiz (front), Brad Dellolacano (standing) and Kyle Durch (back) practice using targeting pods on simulated attack aircraft during lab instruction at the Unmanned Aircraft Systems Fundamentals Course at Randolph Air Force Base, Texas.



Capt. Sam Allen operates the controls of a battlespace simulator in the Unmanned Aircraft Systems Fundamentals Course's laboratory. Captain Allen is an instructor with the 563rd Flying Training Squadron and the UASFC director at Randolph Air Force Base, Texas.

Photo by Rich McFadden





An MQ-1 Predator performs "touch-and-go" training at its home base of Creech Air Force Base, Nev.



"Unmanned aircraft can provide persistent air cover and reconnaissance capability to ground combat commanders for a lot less than it would take, for example, a pair of fighter aircraft to fly combat air patrols above a friendly unit, link up with refueling tankers repeatedly, and risk losing or damaging airframes, not to mention the risk of losing pilots," said Captain Moore.

With the UAS' growth, though, comes an increased demand for people qualified to operate them. To meet this need, the Air Force has also begun a beta-test program, taking eligible candidates from the non-rated officer ranks and giving them a chance to become UAS operators. After initial flight screening and an instrument simulator program, they attend the UFC.

Officers who have completed their Undergraduate Pilot Training also attend the UFC where they get their first glimpse of what it means to operate an unmanned aircraft.

The majority of these students will have no operational and minimal flying experience. "This course will give them a taste of that using simulated airstrikes on a virtual battlefield. It's really pretty exciting," said Captain Moore.

The UFC provides operators with a computer-based simulation using high-end gaming technology and exposing them to multiple Air Force strike aircraft on the cyber-based battlefield.

The course didn't take long to set up. From the first notification that a course was needed to the day UFC opened its doors, the process took only nine weeks and \$3 million.

Despite the relatively quick creation, the course doesn't skimp on the information it delivers to its students. UFC is a fully-functioning, state-of-the-art course through which instructors teach relevant information about aviation and operational capabilities to students.

In the future, the course expects instructors to train 200 officers each year, according to Captain Moore.

"The training is different, but great," said 2nd Lt. Raquel Dronenburg,

the program's first female student. "We're having a lot of fun here, too."

While the "cool" tools and technology integrated into the course have the students impressed, it's not all fun and games. Within several months, these students could find themselves at Creech Air Force Base, Nev., flying Predators and other unmanned aircraft on critical missions in the skies over Iraq and Afghanistan.

In other words, the learning curve is steep and there's a lot of information to absorb in a short amount of time.

"It's imperative the students take advantage of all the training we provide them," said Colonel Cardozo. "They'll be flying 'real' missions soon after leaving here."

Confidence in the training program shows in the self-assurance of the first graduating class. They trust the skills the course instructors teach and demonstrate a better understanding of how important unmanned aircraft are to today's Air Force and joint mission.

"I learned how we fit into the big picture of coordinating the airspace of battle," said 1st Lt. Brandon Ongra, one of nine students who graduated from the first UFC class in December. "We've never been operational in the combat Air Force and here we learned the capabilities of different aircraft and their weapons."

Plus, the course works.

"Does UFC help? Definitely," said 2nd Lt. Brett Matcheck, another graduate from the first UFC class. "We're learning about real-world threats, communication between systems and a lot of basic information that will help us as we move to the next phase of training."

Operating an unmanned aircraft is an important job in today's Air Force and the UFC is the door through which many officers can now pass through to enter the unmanned systems arena.

They won't have to wear gloves or face off in the octagon, though. In this UFC, there are no bells and no matches.

In this UFC all that's needed is the drive and determination to learn and a desire to claim the title as an Airman who will operate unmanned aircraft systems. 🦅



STUDENT - UA OPERATOR

2nd Lt. Raquel Dronenburg

photo by Staff Sgt. Alice Moore



“Although I’m not a UAS aircrew member yet, I very much look forward to being a part of such a unique and dynamic mission. This isn’t the guts and glory of a fighter pilot mission, but the UAS mission saves lives and gets the job done, and I can’t wait to be a part of that. I chose UAS operator training, because I wanted to start flying and having a direct impact as soon as possible. By the time my counterparts are done with their formal training, I will have completed about half of my UAS tour.”

HOME UNIT/BASE:

432nd Operations Support Squadron,
Creech Air Force Base, Nev.

HOMETOWN:

Prescott, Ariz.

ENTERED AIR FORCE:

Aug. 5, 2007



First Lt. Nathan Sukolsky, 7th Expeditionary Air Combat and Control Squadron Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System air weapons officer, tracks suspected movements on radar during a mission over Iraq. This flight marks 40,000 combat hours supporting ongoing combat operations in Southwest Asia for the 116th Air Control Wing's JSTARS. The E-8C JSTARS is an airborne battle management, command and control, intelligence and reconnaissance platform.

A dark, high-tech background with binary code (0s and 1s) and a person in a flight suit. The text is overlaid on the image.

INTELLIGENCE,
SURVEILLANCE
AND RECONNAISSANCE
AIR FORCE MISSION EVOLVES TO MEET
TOMORROW'S CHALLENGES

STORY BY RYAN MATTOX ★ DESIGN BY MIKE CARABAJAL

For more than 60 years the way the Air Force conducts its intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance mission evolved as a result of global events. Since the end of World War II, Airmen have watched, listened and analyzed information gathered from abroad in order to protect the nation from foreign threats and adversaries.

The nation has faced many challenging times and conflicts. Air Force intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, or ISR, units have been used to carry out missions supporting our nation's actions in various wars, crises and conflicts around the globe, such as the Korean War, the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Vietnam War, operations Just Cause, Desert Storm, Allied Force, Deliberate Force; and the Middle East, and the nation's response to terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C.

Today, the responsibility for conducting ISR missions lies with the Air Force Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Agency. The agency has existed in one form or another since late 1947. The agency's birth is credited to then Col. Richard P. Klocko. He worked to create a separate Air Force organization devoted to special information. Through his efforts, the Air Force established the Air Force Security Group on June 23, 1948. That group reorganized a few months later on Oct. 23, 1948, as the United States Air Force Security Service and remained as such until 1979.

In the '80s and '90s, the USAFSS evolved into the Electronic Security Command, 1979-1991, and then the Air Force Intelligence Command, 1991-1993, continued the mission and made significant contributions to the nation's security during the "Cold War" period of nuclear deterrence with the United Soviet Socialist Republic. The Cold War ended Dec. 25, 1991, with the breakup of the Soviet Union.

In 1993, to answer the changing dynamics of the geopolitical world, the Air Force re-designated AFIC as the Air Intelligence Agency. A new field operating agency under the Air Staff, AIA, began executing a new information operations mission.

On June 8, 2007, the Air Force re-designated the Air Intelligence Agency as the Air Force Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Agency. The re-designation of AIA as the AF ISR Agency reflected yet another evolution of the organization's ISR mission. The new field operating agency is aligned under the Air Force deputy chief of staff for intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance.

The AF ISR Agency's mission continues to organize, train, equip and present assigned forces and capabilities to conduct ISR for combatant commanders and the nation. It also implements and oversees the execution of Air Force policies intended to expand ISR capabilities.

To accomplish its mission, the agency employs nearly 12,000 Airmen and civilians serving in more than 70 locations worldwide.

The agency oversees a network of ISR resources. The 70th Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Wing, at Fort George G. Meade, Md.; the 480th ISR Wing at Langley AFB, Va.; the National Air and Space Intelligence Center at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio; and the Air Force Technical Applications Center at Patrick AFB, Fla. provide support. It also manages signals intelligence operations for the 67th Network Warfare Wing and the Air Force Information Operations Center both at Lackland AFB, Texas and the 55th Wing at Offut AFB, Neb. The agency manages missions and provides support for specific intelligence operations within these units. The support includes organizing, training and equipping the cryptologic elements of these organizations.

Inherent in its transformation, the agency is taking even more significant steps toward a new way of how it monitors, collects and processes the intelligence it collects.

The first and perhaps most significant step occurred in early 2008, when the Air Force reassigned the 480th ISRW from Air Combat Command's 8th Air Force to the AF ISR as part of AF ISR transformation. That realignment unified the distributed common ground system, or DCGS, elements under one agency. The DCGS is a family of fixed and deployable multi-source ground processing systems that support a range of intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance systems such as national and commercial satellite systems, U-2, Unmanned Aircraft Systems, and F-16 Theater Airborne Reconnaissance Systems. This change created the Air Force DCGS as a global ISR weapon system, streamlining command and control operations and provided a single point of leadership.

"It is our job to get the right data about an adversary to the right person who needs that information in a timely manner," said Col. Rob Redwine, AF ISR mobilization assistant to the



A KC-10 Extender from the 908th Expeditionary Aerial Refueling Squadron refuels an F-15E Strike Eagle from the 391st Expeditionary Fighter Squadron. The F-15E extends ISR capability with nontraditional sensing using the Sniper pod mounted under its left intake.

commander. "The way we disseminate information has also changed. Technology has given us new ways to distribute and collect information like DCGS."

Today, AF ISR's business of collecting intelligence on adversaries has taken a broader approach.

"ISR is more important today than it ever has been in the past," said Colonel Redwine. "When I came in the Air Force, we traditionally looked at one adversary — the Soviet Union — and they, like us, were a nation-state. They were easy to find."

But unlike the former Soviet Union, the enemy of today doesn't stay in one place and often appears in a variety of forms. So the agency has to place more emphasis on its ISR capabilities.

"Now we face a significantly different adversary that is difficult to locate; not a nation, and blends in with the population," said Colonel Redwine. "Because of the nature of conflict we are involved in today, I think the pendulum has swung from shooter to sensor — and AF ISR is the sensor."

Since the end of the Cold War and the start of the enduring struggle against terrorism and extremism, the world changed and so did the focus of this newly reorganized agency. This change includes how the agency performs its mission, taking on a more total force look.

During the past year the AF ISR agency has created a new, more efficient joint environment. The National Tactical Integration effort integrates national and tactical warfighting ISR capabilities for the combined or joint forces air component commander. Airmen conducting the NTI mission leverage all ISR capabilities to provide critical, time-sensitive information to component commanders for their respective missions.

"NTI gets information into a format that the customer can use," said Staff Sgt. Daniel Herr, an AF ISR Agency intelligence specialist. "But the key to success for this program is a total force working together."

Since Desert Storm the total force concept has been in full effect. Today, active-duty, Guard and Reserve units work together seamlessly.

The ISR total force is made up of 81 percent active duty Airmen, 16 percent Guardsmen and three percent are Reservists.

"We as Guard members have a vested interest in the total force concept," said Lt. Col. Kip Clark, 137th Intelligence Squadron commander. "We have always been involved in missions, dating back 55 years. This is nothing new."

The Air National Guard has three stand-alone intelligence groups, which have distributed ground stations in Indiana,

Massachusetts, and Kansas. In addition, the Guard operates three squadrons in Alabama, Arkansas and Nevada. The ANG also has two associate squadrons at Langley AFB, Va., and Beale AFB, Calif. Their mission is to support warfighters in their respective areas of responsibility by providing intelligence analysis and distributing intelligence products to the combatant commanders.

A recent result of the transformation is the Guard's 181st Intelligence Wing in Terre Haute, Ind., which includes the manning of a distributed ground station.

The Indiana Air Guard unit stationed at Hulman Field Airport had been a fighter wing since 1954. Last summer, the wing was re-designated July 13, officially marking its transition from flying jets to processing and providing intelligence ground support and air operations at forward locations around the world.

Airmen in the 181st IW are now looking toward the future of warfare and many are re-training from being crew chiefs and fighter pilots to their new military professions, or Air Force Specialty Codes, in the intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance field.

More than 1,000 Airmen in the former fighter wing are involved in retraining into the intelligence career field. Training consists of two to seven months of formal training at Goodfellow AFB, Texas, and Keesler AFB, Miss., and another two months of on-the-job training in the field.

After training, these Airmen will support their new mission — operating a distributed ground station. This is a digital imagery and surveillance unit directly involved in global missions using the newest high-tech imagery equipment and unmanned aircraft systems at deployed locations. The station translates the imagery to troops on the ground and aircraft in the sky.

One of those units involved in this transformation is the 137th Intelligence Squadron.

"The biggest difference is, instead of driving through the gate to train and then leaving, we are now driving through the gate and providing 24/7 operations to the joint warfighter," said Colonel Clark.

The 137th IS provides assessments of adversary forces and support capabilities. The unit, through gathering intelligence, helps prepare units entering a particular battle space with details about adversarial forces they are about to engage.

Air Force Reserve contributions to the total force team include the 548th ISR Group, at Beale AFB, Calif., an associate unit combining active duty and Reserve Airmen.

The group operates Distributed Ground System-2 and Deployable Shelterized System-Film components of the Air Force



The MQ-9 Reaper uses a multi-spectral assembly during a mission. The assembly provides infrared sensor capability, color/monochrome daylight video and image-intensified video.

Distributed Common Ground System. The group's mission is to produce strategic, operational and tactical intelligence in support of combat operations. The unit complements the Air Force Reserve's current associate unit presence in the Global Hawk unmanned aircraft system mission at Beale AFB.

For the customer, the products the AF ISR and its total force create and provide are invaluable to the joint warfighter.

For Staff Sgt. Loren Chaidez, a network analyst and NCO in charge of the ISR Operations Center, his role while at his home station is to monitor and collect intelligence to be analyzed. However, when he is deployed, he becomes a customer of those same products he provides from home station at Lackland AFB.

"Knowledge is power," said Sergeant Chaidez. "The more information you have the better edge you have against any adversary."

While deployed, Sergeant Chaidez uses that knowledge from his home station to locate and engage the enemy.

"You are out there finding bad guys and taking them out," he said. "Depending on what is going on, one team would go out and one would come back in -- some of those missions lasting as long as 30 hours."

"The way we act has an impact on our nation's defense," said Sergeant Chaidez. "We (active duty, Reserve and Guard) are all part of a machine that protects and defends the nation." 🦅



Staff Sgt. Loren Chaidez analyzes data at the Air Force Intelligence, Surveillance, Reconnaissance Agency in San Antonio.



Maj. John Merten with the 99th Expeditionary Reconnaissance Squadron waits for the maintainers to prepare his U-2 "Dragonlady" aircraft for taxiing in Southwest Asia. The U-2 is a single-seat, single-engine, high-altitude/near space reconnaissance and surveillance aircraft providing signals, imagery and electronic measurements and signature intelligence.



RE-INVIGORATING THE
**NUCLEAR
ENTERPRISE**

AIR FORCE IMPLEMENTS NEW ROADMAP
TO SAFEGUARD ITS NUCLEAR
DETERRENCE CAPABILITIES

STORY BY STAFF SGT. MATTHEW BATES ★ DESIGN BY LUKE BORLAND

For Senior Airman Robert Waziak, mistakes are not allowed. In his job, one mistake can have catastrophic results. No one has to tell him, though. All he has to do to remind himself is look at the nuclear weapons surrounding him on a daily basis. It's a glance that is both sobering and awe-inspiring.

The Airman is a nuclear weapons technician with the 2nd Munitions Squadron at Barksdale Air Force Base, La., and he spends his days working on weapons that belong to one of the Air Force's most lethal ordnance arsenals – nuclear-tipped cruise missiles.

But if this fact bothers Airman Waziak, he doesn't show it.

"I think it's a cool job," he said. "These weapons are an important part of the Air Force and it's my job to make sure they work the right way every time they're needed."

Cool or not, these weapons are an important part of the Air Force's arsenal, and the nuclear program plays a key role in the defense strategy of the nation.

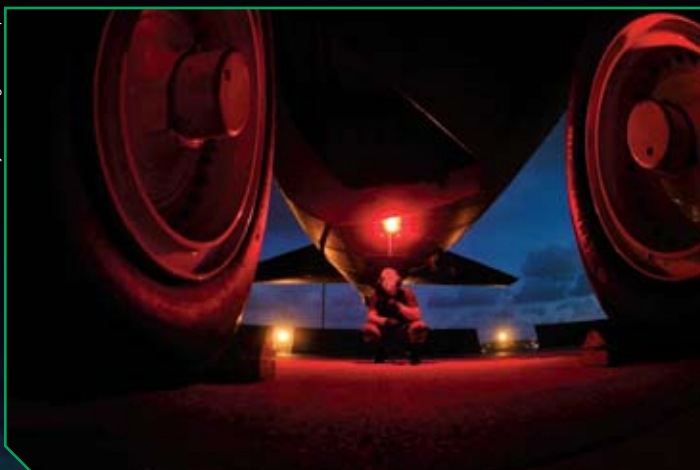
Recently, this program has come under attack. Incidents, including a mistaken shipment to Taiwan of electrical fuses for nuclear warheads and a B-52 Stratofortress that was mistakenly armed with six nuclear-tipped cruise missiles, raised questions about the Air Force's stewardship of its nuclear enterprise. Military leaders, the media, and politicians all wanted answers.

A dramatic shakeup ensued, and when the dust settled, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, who cited "a decline in the Air Force's

Photo by Lance Cheung

Capt. Jeff Rogers (left) and 1st Lt. Patrick Applegate are ready for a training mission in the lower deck of a B-52 Stratofortress at Minot Air Force Base, N.D. The officers are with the 5th Bomb Wing at Minot AFB.

Photo by Master Sgt. Val Gempis



Senior Airman William Fay inspects the warning light inside the wheel well of a B-52 Stratofortress bomber aircraft prior to night-flying training mission. He is a 5th Bomb Wing crew chief deployed from Minot Air Force Base, N.D., to Barksdale Air Force Base, La.

Photo by Lance Cheung



Under a B-52 Stratofortress at Barksdale Air Force Base, La., Airmen maneuver an 80,000 pound munitions trailer carrying eight AGM-86B/C air launched cruise missiles.







(From left to right) The nuclear cruise missile maintenance team of Airman 1st Class Robert Windsor, and Staff Sgts. Charles Bell and Kevin Kimbrough prepare to test the operational readiness of an AGM-86B air launched cruise missile with the assistance of Senior Airman Robert Waziak in the control room at Barksdale Air Force Base, La. They are conducting a level one test for electrical cable continuity.

nuclear mission focus and performance and a failure by Air Force leaders to respond effectively" replaced senior leaders and charged new Secretary of the Air Force Michael Donley and new Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Norton Schwartz with a clear goal: "Fix it."

"And we intend to," said General Schwartz, the Air Force's 19th chief of staff. "Maintaining accountability and improving stewardship of the Air Force's nuclear program is the top priority."

As a result, Air Force officials have begun rigorous accountability and a "back to basics" approach for compliance, precision and reliability within the nuclear arena. The goal is to restore the Air Force's nuclear mission to the standard of excellence for which it was known throughout the entire Cold War.

"We will train, organize and inspect to that standard," said General Schwartz. "The bottom line is we lost focus, and we're bringing that focus back. We're going to make sure that we're doing

our nuclear mission the right way, which is the Air Force way."

One method Air Force leaders plan to use to accomplish this is setting up a nuclear-only major command, called the Air Force Global Strike Command. This organization will include both the 8th and 20th Air Forces and will be responsible for management of the Air Force's nuclear assets. The provisional Global Strike Command officially stood up Jan. 12 at Bolling Air Force Base, D.C.

"We will have the nuclear missiles and the nuclear-capable bombers in the same organization, and the focus will be on the nuclear mission," said General Schwartz.

In addition to establishing this new command, Air Force leaders also created a new Air Staff directorate for nuclear matters. Led by Maj. Gen. Donald Alston the Strategic Deterrence and Nuclear Integration Office, or A10, will be the focal point on the Air Staff for all nuclear matters.



Photo by Lance Cheung



Senior Airman Matthew Paul Rivera and his team must work together to manually lift one of the 800-pound B-52 Stratofortress' bomb bay doors at Barksdale Air Force Base, La. Once locked into position, a rotary launcher can fit under the bomber.

Photo by Lance Cheung



Senior Airman Christi Fought performs checks and tasks before weapons are uploaded to a B-52 Stratofortress for certification at Barksdale Air Force Base, La. She is with the 2nd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron.

"The bottom line is we lost focus, and we're bringing that focus back."

— Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Norton Schwartz

"The new directorate provides policy oversight, increased institutional focus and staff integration for nuclear issues," said General Schwartz. "The A10 will be instrumental in managing the overall nuclear enterprise and will be directly involved in implementing the Air Force nuclear roadmap as well as preparing to stand up Air Force Global Strike Command."

Other changes to the Air Force's nuclear enterprise also are underway. The Nuclear Weapons Center at Kirtland AFB, N.M., underwent revitalization and expansion with clearly defined chains of command to prevent repeats of past problems, the general said.

"The Nuclear Weapons Center now has complete control over the whole sustainment supply chain," said General Schwartz. "That wasn't the case earlier, and so now we have a single entity that is responsible for ops and employment and a single entity that is responsible for sustainment."

The chief of staff also pointed to efforts within the Air Force to develop a more centralized inspection process that ensures nuclear materiel is handled properly.

The general is impressed with the progress Air Force officials are making, but knows there are other issues to tackle -- issues such as how the Air Force can systematically rebuild nuclear expertise within the ranks of Airmen through training and career development.

All these changes are a vital part of Air Force stewardship of the strategic nuclear deterrence capabilities, a stewardship that is now re-focused and re-energized.

"The Air Force is now moving in the right direction," said Secretary Donley. "We are reinvigorating the nuclear enterprise to re-establish the confidence in our ability to provide nuclear deterrence to our nation and our allies."



Munitions on display demonstrate the full capabilities of the B-52 Stratofortress, a bomber in the Air Force.

And deterrence is the backbone of the entire nuclear program.

"It's all about deterrence," said Senior Master Sgt. Sean Wheat, a cruise missile production superintendent with the 2nd MXS. "Each of these weapons gives the Air Force a tremendous capability that other countries recognize."

With the Cold War over, the nuclear deterrent mission has transformed to meet the needs of modern defense strategy as recognized by the Department of Defense and the Air Force. This capability remains effective in keeping the nation's enemies from attacking the United States.

Lt. Gen. Robert J. Elder, commander, 8th Air Force (Air Forces Strategic), speaking at the Air Force Association's Global Warfare Symposium, noted that the focus on the nuclear mission degraded in the years following breakup of the Soviet Union and since the deactivation of Strategic Air Command. However, today Air Force officials are dead earnest about restoring credibility in the nuclear arena, and have the nuclear operational and security inspection results to prove it.

"We are definitely focused, not only on nuclear operations, but also on nuclear deterrence," General Elder said. "I think we've been able to recreate the same kind of enthusiasm for what we did during the Cold War."

He explained that 8th Air Force is evolving in conjunction with the new Global Strike Command, which has tightened its nuclear procedures, discontinuing the storage of inert and live nuclear weapons in the same facility. The B-52 wings at Barksdale Air Force Base, La., and Minot Air Force Base, N.D., have excelled on several Nuclear Operational Readiness Inspections, including several that were no-notice. Air Force leaders also directed a tougher

inspection process, and insisted on a greater frequency of inspections for nuclear personnel and assets.

"Nuclear Surety Inspections are the most demanding inspections we conduct, and conducting them on a no-notice basis ensures Air Combat Command Airmen are maintaining the highest professional standards of accountability and responsibility in the control of nuclear weapons and nuclear-related material," said Brig. Gen. Joseph Reynes, ACC inspector general.

"There is no room for error in dealing with the nuclear enterprise of the U.S. Air Force," he said. "We must meet the highest standards of safety, security and effectiveness. Anything less than full compliance is unacceptable."

As the eyes of the nation look upon the Air Force's nuclear program, the service's leaders and Airmen remain confident.

"Air Force nuclear capabilities help dissuade and deter our adversaries and it is always best to win without fighting," said General Elder. "And, while today's fight is vitally important to our Air Force, the capabilities that we provide in support of our nation's nuclear deterrent force is just as, if not more, important."

For people like Airman Waziak, there is no controversy, only a job. "I don't look at the incidents and the resulting publicity as a negative thing at all," he said. "I look at it as a chance for us to show the rest of the country how well we do our jobs."

"Can we get better? Of course," he said. "There are always ways to improve, and that's what we're doing, working every day to get better."

No one has to tell him this, either. All he has to do is look at the men and women around him who work day-in and day-out to ensure the nuclear weapons under their control are secure. 

Photo by Lance Cheung



Staff Sgts. James Pavatt (right) and Jon Tokay use a munitions handling unit to raise a fully loaded rotary launcher carrying eight AGM-86B/C air launched cruise missiles to the on-board assembly inside a B-52 Stratofortress at Barksdale Air Force Base, La.

Photo by Lance Cheung



Staff Sgt. Chris Misenheimer performs routine maintenance on a rotary launcher at Barksdale Air Force Base, La. Sergeant Misenheimer is a nuclear weapons technician with the 2nd Munitions Squadron at Barksdale AFB.

NUCLEAR WEAPONS TECHNICIAN

Staff Sgt. Chris J. Misenheimer

photo by Lance Cheung



“I like the fact that while serving in the Air Force, I have the opportunity to work on a strategic weapon system that has the largest deterrence factor in our arsenal. I get to meet and work with people from all parts of the country. I also learn more and more every day, my education never stops. This career field comes with many challenges and I’m always up for that!”

HOME UNIT/BASE:

2nd Munitions Squadron,
Barksdale Air Force Base, La.

HOMETOWN:

Hampton, Va.

DEPLOYMENTS:

332nd Air Expeditionary Wing’s on-base hospital, Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

ENTERED AIR FORCE:

Sept. 9, 2002

AIR FORCE LEADERS SEEK PIONEERS TO BECOME TOMORROW'S

UAS

UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS OPERATORS



OFFICERS STEER YOUR CAREER

"Ultimately, our intent is to form a dedicated cadre of professional UAS operators. The Air Force is dedicated to building the UAS force our nation requires while continuing to lead innovation in capabilities and employment."

-General Norton Schwartz,
Chief of Staff of the Air Force

Candidates to become UAS operators are in high demand. Future requirements for rated and non-rated officers as well as enlisted Airmen will soar in the next few years. Air Force leaders have said the number of operators will increase from 300 to more than 1,100 in the next five years. Watch for AFPC messages seeking volunteers.



CYBER UPDATE

AIR FORCE CYBER OPERATIONS EVOLVE
INTO NUMBERED AIR FORCE

STORY BY STAFF SGT. MATTHEW ROSINE AND CARLA PAMPE ✦ DESIGN BY G. PATRICK HARRIS

As Senior Airman Robbie Arp sits down at his computer on a normal Monday morning, he is about to enter another dimension.

With a turn of his wrist the Air Force broadcaster swings his common access card into place. As the high-tech circuits connect, his computer flickers and he is instantly transported into the realm of cyberspace.

A domain controlled and secured in part by America's Air Force, cyberspace is a critical part of today's warfighting mission.

"The mission of the United States Air Force is to *fly, fight and win...* in air, space and cyberspace," said Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Norton Schwartz.

But, cyberspace isn't just a bunch of computers. According to the Department of Defense definition, cyberspace is a "global domain within the information environment consisting of the interdependent network of information technology infrastructures, including the Internet, telecommunications networks, computer systems, and embedded processors and controllers." Simply put, if an electronic device emits, transmits or reflects – it is in the cyberspace domain. It is an operational domain equal to land, sea, air and space. Cyberspace contains and controls America's communication networks, transportation, finances, and standard utilities – the nation's critical infrastructure. These domains must be defended against enemy attack.

In fact, the nation's dominance in cyberspace is critical for command and control operations for America's 21st Century

warfighters. It is also an integral part of today's joint operations as well as America's national security. In September of 2007, the Air Force officially activated the Air Force Cyberspace Command (Provisional) to help develop cyberspace operations as an Air Force functional area. To better meet tomorrow's need for dominance in cyberspace, the Air Force is establishing a Component Numbered Air Force to support the joint warfighter.

"Inside the Air Force, I think there was a recognition of the need for a combat organization that pays attention to the cyber domain, which we are so dependent on not only in warfighting, but also in humanitarian operations and in intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance operations," said Maj. Gen. William T. Lord, Commander of AFCYBER (P). "All of those are so heavily dependent on cyber that it has caused a dialogue that led to an organization which will be focused on this domain."

As the provisional command transitions under Space Command, Air Force cyber warriors will soon be fighting as part of the 24th Air Force – a Cyber Numbered Air Force. This unique numbered air force will capitalize on existing systems and relationships between the cyberspace operational capabilities and Space Command's impressive digital operations. Under AFSPC, the new Air Force Cyber Numbered Air Force will directly support U.S. Northern Command as well as U.S. Strategic Command in their missions, which include everything from hurricane relief efforts to defending the United States.

"With this move we'll be able to take advantage of a common

photo by Lance Cheung



Telecommunications specialist Master Sgt. Johnnie Hernandez taps into a PBX distribution panel to check a phone line at the Defense Media Activity - San Antonio. The Air Force Information Operations Center executes a comprehensive program to help protect Air Force telecommunications switch systems and services. An important component of this program is a capability to monitor transmissions to identify unauthorized dial-up modems, suspect telephone call patterns and other unusual activities.

photo by Lance Cheung



Rodney Pratt exits a receiving antenna at the Floyd Site of Rome Air Force Base, N.Y. This was the site of the first passive satellite communication transmission in 1960.

technical expertise while facilitating career development for our space and cyber warriors,” said Gen. Robert Kehler, AFSPC commander. General Kehler stressed that aligning cyber operations under Space Command will bring together two missions that depend on each other to survive, and join together Airmen who have similar technical skills.

“Being a numbered Air Force gives us direct connectivity not only to United States Strategic Command but to all of the Combatant Commanders...” — Maj. Gen. William T. Lord

The evolution of the Cyber NAF is just another example of the numerous steps the Air Force has taken to improve its capabilities in the realm of cyberspace. This evolution is expected to help the Air Force streamline cyber operations and allow Air Force cyber warriors to provide a more personalized, combat capable and highly-effective cyber mission to its joint operations around the globe.

While the evolution of the Cyber NAF will cause some changes to career fields in the Air Force, Airmen around the world will continue to perform their day-to-day mission with the same degree of excellence that the Air Force is known for.

“There is, and has been since about April of 2008, a career field roadmap that shows exactly what the transition is from

today’s career forces to tomorrow’s career forces for both officer and enlisted members,” said General Lord. “It includes a variety of the communication skills, the intelligence skills, space and electronic warfare officer skills, and how that transition will go.”

The evolution of the Air Force’s cyberspace operations will

also allow for the expansion of Wing commands, organizational restructuring, new operational capabilities and even basing opportunities. As the Air Force completes its decisions on how best to mold the 24th Air Force, the Cyber NAF looks to the future as a key member of today’s and tomorrow’s Air Force team, something General Lord is excited about.

“Being a numbered Air Force gives us direct connectivity not only to United States Strategic Command but to all of the Combatant Commanders to provide trained and equipped cyber forces for not only today’s defense, but for tomorrow’s fight,” he said.

To learn more about Air Force cyber operations and updates affecting the Cyber NAF, visit www.afcyber.af.mil



Senior Airman David Kimbrough and Tech. Sgt. Josh Wedin examine communications wires beneath an aircraft shelter at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. Both Airmen are “wire dawgs” whose work takes them underground and into confined spaces. Secure communications systems are integral to cyber operations in a deployed environment.



Maj. Matthew Imperial reviews information as part of cyber operations. Major Imperial is the senior duty officer in the Air Force Network Operations Center, Barksdale Air Force Base, La.



photo by Airman 1st Class Jason Epley

photo by Lance Cheung

Global Strike

AIR FORCE ACTIVATES PROVISIONAL COMMAND

STORY BY AIRMAN STAFF ✦ DESIGN BY MIKE CARABAJAL

A team of experts, charged with a critical element of rebuilding the nuclear enterprise, is currently grinding out details to stand up the Air Force's new Global Strike Command.

The team, comprising approximately 55 Airmen, led by Brig. Gen. James M. Kowalski, occupies temporary quarters at Bolling Air Force Base, D.C., while attending to multiple facets of manning, equipping and locating a permanent home station for the command.

Secretary of the Air Force Michael Donley officially stood up the

provisional command Jan. 12, along with supporting detachments at Air Combat Command at Langley AFB, Va., and Air Force Space Command at Peterson AFB, Colo.

Following the Air Force's nuclear roadmap, the command's charter is to lead preparation activities for the establishment of a major command that will consolidate nuclear operations under a single organization.

General Kowalski assumed command and is responsible for implementing the organization's directives, which outline necessary



A B-2 Spirit deployed to Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii undergoes maintenance. The Air Force's new Global Strike Command is taking control of the service's nuclear-armed missiles as well as its strategic bombers, such as the B-2.

photo by Tech. Sgt. Shane A. Cuomo

“The principal focus of the new command will be on our nuclear deterrence mission and ensuring the day-to-day excellence demanded by this mission.”

— Brig. Gen. James Kowalski

actions to stand up the AFGSC.

Provisional command officials also work closely with representatives from Headquarters Air Force Strategic Deterrence and Nuclear Integration Office (A10), Air Combat Command, Air Force Space Command, Air Force Materiel Command and U.S. Strategic Command as AFGSC elements refine their roles.

The provisional command is a temporary organization that does not have any manpower authorizations and will be inactivated upon the standup of the permanent command. Headquarters Air Force and major command staffs provided temporary personnel to fill a core headquarters element of 55 members who are the team of subject matter experts developing functional requirements for AFGSC.

“There is an incredibly rich tradition of operational competency in this mission, and our Air Force has done a lot of work to restore our focus on deterrence,” said General Kowalski. “We look forward to laying the foundation needed to stand up Global Strike Command.”

General Kowalski is taking steps to stand up the new command, which will control the service’s nuclear-armed missiles as well as its strategic bombers, the B-2 Spirit and B-52 Stratofortress.

Provisional command officials announced, in January, six possible locations for the eventual permanent home for the headquarters.

Candidate bases for the permanent AFGSC (in alphabetical order) are Barksdale AFB, La.; F.E. Warren AFB, Wyo.; Malmstrom AFB, Mont.; Minot AFB, N.D.; Offutt AFB, Neb.; and Whiteman AFB, Mo.

Due to the uniqueness of the nuclear operations culture and the significant time required to develop personnel, processes and systems to create an operational environment which safely and reliably meets the extraordinary levels of precision engendered by such operations, all candidate bases must meet the requirements necessary to sustain these functions.

“The principal focus of the new command will be on our nuclear deterrence mission and ensuring the day-to-day excellence demanded by this mission. Co-locating the headquarters on an installation where there are significant operational functions associated with nuclear forces will provide positive synergies for this new command,” said Maj. Gen. Donald Alston, assistant chief of staff, Strategic Deterrence and Nuclear Integration.

Air Force officials now will evaluate each of the six bases against the same set of criteria. The criteria include synergy with the AFGSC nuclear mission including availability of requisite expertise, facilities and infrastructure, support capacity, transportation and access, communications and bandwidth, and security to support the AFGSC headquarters. Air Force officials plan to make a final selection this summer.

In addition to location, the provisional command team is developing functional requirements while concentrating on the three major focus areas outlined by the Air Force Nuclear Enterprise Roadmap: structural changes, changes in process and changes in culture.

Twentieth Air Force and 8th Air Force will fall under AFGSC, bringing the Air Force’s intercontinental ballistic missiles and nuclear-capable bombers — the B-2s and B-52s — under one command



The secretary of the Air Force selected Brig. Gen. James Kowalski as the commander for the provisional Air Force Global Strike Command Dec. 18.

for the first time since the inactivation of Strategic Air Command. The 8th Air Force will adjust its responsibilities to focus solely on its bombers before the switch.

Officials move toward their goal of standing up the AFGSC with initial operating capability in the fall.

“We are beginning the deliberate planning process to see if we can achieve that timeline. That’s very aggressive. This is the nuclear business, so it’s going to take as long as it needs to take,” said General Alston.

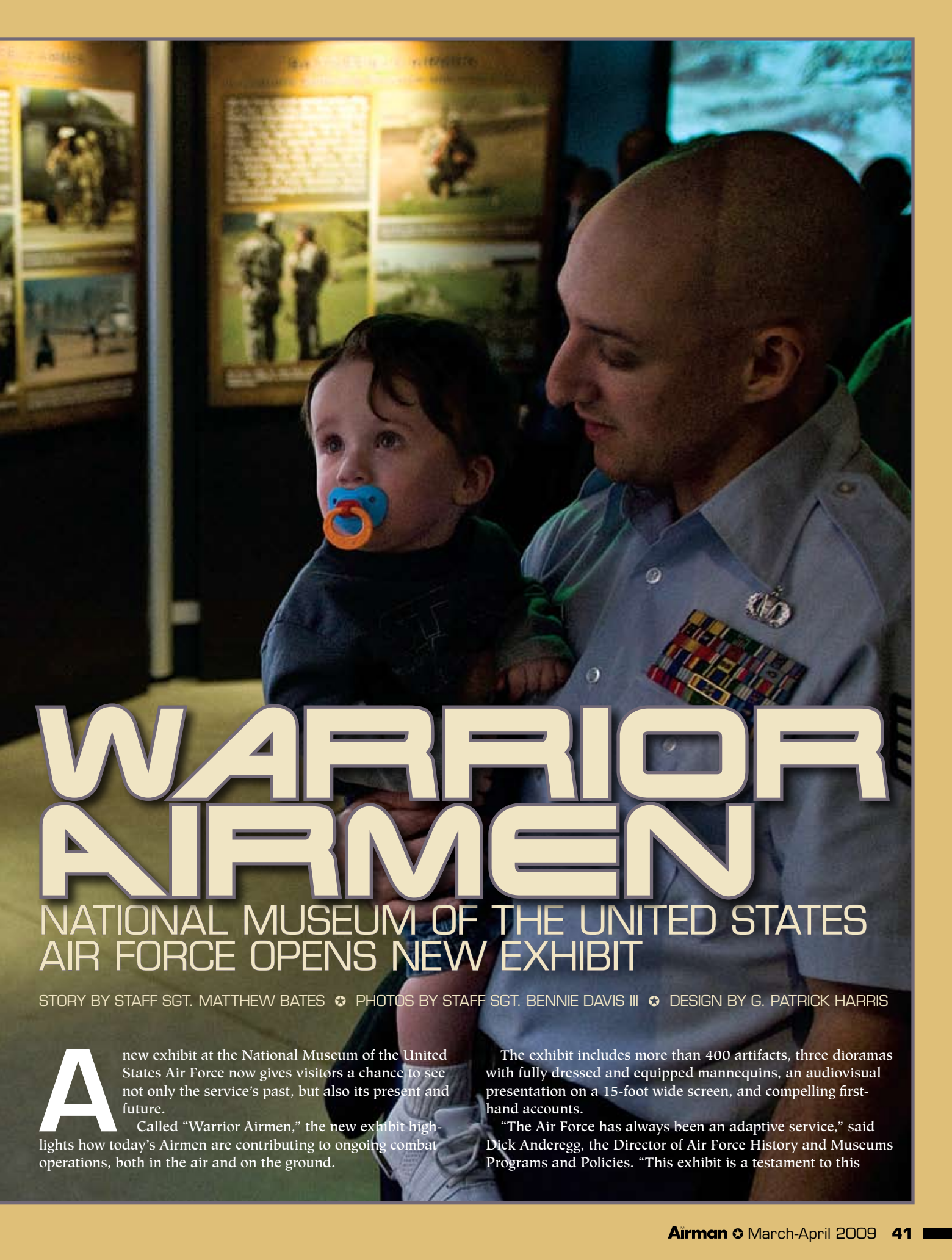
Airmen at three ICBM wings — 90th Missile Wing at F.E. Warren AFB; 91st Missile Wing at Minot AFB; and 341st Missile Wing at Malmstrom AFB — and three bomber wings — 2nd Bomb Wing at Barksdale AFB; 5th Bomb Wing at Minot AFB; and 509th Bomb Wing at Whiteman AFB — will wear the AFGSC patch. Airmen assigned to those wings are already seeing a significant change in culture even though these forces will remain at their current bases.

“We need to ensure that we have a culture that is highly self-critical so that we are proactively looking for weakness in our processes and empowering all levels to act on those weaknesses and overcome them,” said General Alston. “One of the means by which we’re doing this is changing our inspection processes. So we are going to fortify on the experience levels within our inspection teams. We are also in the process of reevaluating the Air Force corporate structure in order to ensure that nuclear competes effectively for Air Force resources.”

Beyond these factors, the roadmap also calls for enhanced training, education and force development for Airmen within nuclear career specialties. 



Staff Sgt. Jason Kinney, a Tactical Air Command and Control specialist, who served four tours in Iraq, shows his son, Dylan, equipment he used and donated to the Warrior Airmen Exhibit at the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio.

A man in a light blue military uniform with a name tag and a colorful patch is holding a baby. The baby has a blue and orange pacifier. They are in a museum with historical photos on the wall.

WARRIOR AIRMEN

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE UNITED STATES
AIR FORCE OPENS NEW EXHIBIT

STORY BY STAFF SGT. MATTHEW BATES ✪ PHOTOS BY STAFF SGT. BENNIE DAVIS III ✪ DESIGN BY G. PATRICK HARRIS

A new exhibit at the National Museum of the United States Air Force now gives visitors a chance to see not only the service's past, but also its present and future.

Called "Warrior Airmen," the new exhibit highlights how today's Airmen are contributing to ongoing combat operations, both in the air and on the ground.

The exhibit includes more than 400 artifacts, three dioramas with fully dressed and equipped mannequins, an audiovisual presentation on a 15-foot wide screen, and compelling first-hand accounts.

"The Air Force has always been an adaptive service," said Dick Anderegg, the Director of Air Force History and Museums Programs and Policies. "This exhibit is a testament to this

(Right) Senior Airman Harry Bromley, a pararescuer from the 123rd Special Tactics Squadron, reads about the members of his unit who gave their lives during the war on terror. He was one of many Airmen who visited the opening of the Warrior Airmen Exhibit at the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio.



(Far right) An aerial gunner aboard a MH-53 Pave Low helicopter is one of the many displays of the Warrior Airmen Exhibit, which uses donated items from Airmen who served in the recent combat operations.



adaptability and serves as an opportunity for future generations to see what we already know our Airmen are capable of."

The exhibit, which opened to the public Jan. 12, is divided into three sections, each highlighting a way the Air Force is supporting efforts in Afghanistan and Iraq. The first section, "Battlefield Airmen," is dedicated to Air Force special operations forces such as pararescuemen, tactical air command and control specialists and combat weather personnel. The section opens with an immersive video recreation of the battle for Takur Ghar, where several Air Force pararescuemen were either killed or wounded while attempting to rescue a Navy SEAL who had fallen out of his helicopter when it was hit by a rocket-propelled grenade.

The next section, "Expeditionary Combat Airmen," highlights other ground operations Airmen performing on a daily basis in support of operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. These Airmen include security forces personnel, convoy operators and explosive ordnance disposal teams.

The final section, "In the Air," demonstrates how pilots and aircrews continue to perform important missions in the air, providing close-air support, flying rescue aircraft and dropping bombs on target.

"The Air Force is truly engaged in the war on terrorism," said Jeff Duford, the museum's research historian. "But not many people realize how many Airmen are working on the ground. This exhibit will hopefully educate a lot of people on this fact."

All of the uniforms, items and photos in the exhibit were donated by Airmen who served in either Iraq or Afghanistan. For them, this exhibit is a way to honor all Airmen and keep the memory of their sacrifices alive.

"This place, this exhibit, defines legacy and heritage," said Senior Master Sgt. Ramon Colon-Lopez, a pararescuer who donated several items he used and wore while in Afghanistan. "Our legacy now lives on for our sons and daughters."

The exhibit also includes several firsts at the museum. There are several digital touch screens that allow visitors to interact with the displays and the donated items include numerous special operations "tools of the trade."

The exhibit itself is also an original at the museum. It is not a monument to the past, but to the present and future of Air Force operations.

"The past is static and never changes," said retired Maj. Gen.



Master Sgt. Keary Miller, a pararescuer honored in the Warrior Airmen Exhibit at the Nation Museum of the U.S. Air Force, shows his son, Ian, equipment used by special operations Airmen during the war on terror. Master Sgt. Miller fought during the Battle of Takur Ghar, the deadliest entanglement of Operation Anaconda in Afghanistan.

Charles D. Metcalf, the museum's director. "This exhibit is a contemporary one, though. It will change and grow with the mission as long as the mission continues."

The "Warrior Airmen" exhibit is a permanent display at the museum and will be open year-round.

"More than 1 million people will see this exhibit each year and our hope is that they will better appreciate the courageous sacrifices of today's Airmen and gain a better understanding of how they make a difference in the world," Mr. Duford said.

The National Museum of the United States Air Force is located at Wright Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio. It is open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. seven days a week (closed Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day). Admission and parking are free. 🦅

An exhibit reflects Tech. Sgt. Keary Miller, a pararescuer who fought during the Battle of Takur Ghar, the deadliest entanglement of Operation Anaconda in Afghanistan. The display is part of the Warrior Airmen Exhibit at the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio.





WARRIOR AIRMEN

Warrior Airmen are in harm's way,
taking the fight to the enemy in the
Global War on Terror.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY LANCE CHEUNG ✦ DESIGN BY G. PATRICK HARRIS

THE GENDER CHALLENGE

TOUGH TIMES — WOMEN TO AIRMEN

With the stroke of a pen, on June 12, 1948, President Harry S. Truman signed Public Law 625, the Women's Armed Services Integration Act, and opened military doors for the enlistment and appointment of women in the Regular and Reserve Air Force. Less than a month later, July 8, Sgt. Ester Blake used her pen to make history as the first enlisted woman to join the Women in the Air Force program.

No longer were women relegated to auxiliary corps.

It's been 61 years since those doors were opened and pioneers flew in. Sergeant Blake transferred from the Women's Army Corps. Close behind were new recruits, with Patricia Ann Rahe in the lead, who had no prior military experience. Just as today, these recruits reported to Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio.

Just because the gateway was open, that did not mean it was an easy passage. Retired Chief Master Sgt. Dale Armwood, a Chester, Pa., native, remembered WAF had a very bad reputation early on.

"(Hometown) people thought the women in the Air Force were there to service the guys in the Air Force," said Chief Armwood.

The perception was not made any better because "Women had to submit a full length picture. You had to look good enough to come into the Air Force," said Chief Master Sgt. Carol Poynor, who entered the Air Force in August 1958.

Then-Tech. Sgt. Carol Poynor's official photo during her first tour as a Military Training Instructor at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas.



Some of the challenges were subtle or indirect, such as the initial limitations to combat career field choices, pay allowances and recruiting restrictions.

How Air Force officials approached the orientation and training of women was boldly clear in the 1954 Air Training Command Manual 35-2, "WAF Manual - A Handbook for the Air Force Woman."

"The Story of a Girl named Ginger Jones" is the narrative subject the writers used to take trainees through each section. One entire section of the manual detailed the importance of good facial complexion and proper skin care.

By today's standards this section communicated much more than its first paragraph. "You're the girl. You're the girl who can do something wonderful with her looks. Do you know why? Because you're in a unique spot as a WAF," states the first paragraph.

If that is not enough to raise an eyebrow in 2009, it goes on.

"Beyond the automatic blessings, your looks are all up to you. The first step is frankness with yourself. Do you like 'her?' Do you

like the way she walks? Talks? Is she, frankly too big anywhere? What about her complexion? Do you think she is as pretty as she could be?"

The manual, a result of a skewed perception of women, left its mark and legacy.

Chief Poynor felt the pain of that perception after her first assignment at Hamilton AFB, Calif. This was her first duty station. For four years she worked as an administrative clerk in a communications squadron.

"We did a lot of work, I did good work. There were a lot of things going on and there was a lot of overtime," she recalled, her voice resonating with conviction. After she left for her next base, the chief clerk submitted her for an Air Force Commendation Medal. When he took the recommendation to his colonel for signature, she said that the commander said, "No (gosh-darn) WAF is that good," and threw it in the trashcan.

Yes, it hurt her, but today she shrugged her shoulders and said, "What are you going to do?"

Despite policy and procedures being in



Retired Chief Master Sgt. Carol Poynor poses for a picture at the Enlisted Heroes Walk at Lackland AFB, Texas. Chief Poynor entered the Air Force in August 1958 and served twice as a Military Training Instructor.



Retired Chief Master Sgt. Dale Armwood poses for a picture in front of Airmen participating in the Airmen's Run at Lackland AFB, Texas. Chief Armwood joined the Air Force in 1963, and was the first female instructor at the then-Strategic Air Command's NCO Academy at Barksdale AFB, La.



Then-Tech. Sgt. Dale Armwood's official photo when she taught at the Strategic Air Command NCO Academy at Barksdale AFB, La. Today, Chief Armwood's advice for female Airmen is "Don't use it as an excuse - suck it up."

place to appeal, people were involved in the process, and not all of the time was it men who were roadblocks to equality.

"Sometimes the women were harder on women than men were," said Chief Armwood about challenges that seem to her to come from the left and the right. In 1978-80, then-Tech. Sgt. Armwood was the first woman to develop curriculum for the Leadership and Management Development Center at Maxwell AFB, Ala. Part of her duties were working with Chief Master Sgt. Dottie Holiday on evaluation trips. Upon their return, the handwritten reports were submitted to a secretarial pool but they were never typed out. They guessed that (the pool) kept moving their reports to the bottom of the pile.

Exasperated, they took action to resolve the situation, Chief Armwood recalled.

"We put together the Women's Sewing Circle and Terrorist Group, where we had brownbag luncheons with all the women and we would talk about all the things that upset us that day. It helped a lot. (The secretaries) would air what was bothering them and we were able to figure out where they were coming from and they were able to know where we (Sergeants Holiday and Armwood) were coming from. And then we knew we were all working toward the same thing," Chief Armwood said. "After that, we never had any problems getting our stuff typed up."

To the issue of allowances and privileges, retired Brig. Gen. Wilma Vaught, who joined the Air Force in 1957, said during the Oct. 31, 2007, Air Force Heritage to Horizon Women's Training Symposium, "There was a time when

servicewomen who married a civilian man couldn't get the same privileges as the men married to civilian women. The husbands couldn't get an identification card unless they were disabled or declared mentally incompetent."

Change came in 1973, General Vaught said, when a brave 23-year-old Air Force first lieutenant challenged statutes that allowed a married serviceman to qualify for higher housing benefits even if his wife was not dependent on his income, while requiring a married servicewoman to prove her husband's dependence before receiving the same benefit.

The Supreme Court voted 8-1 to overturn the law.

Despite the inequities and negative perceptions at the time, Chief Armwood said she saw a greater goal. The Air Force, with great opportunities, was the key to women being something other than a housewife or mother. In addition to education, Chief Armwood, an African-American woman, saw a way to get an education and to also get away from racial prejudices.

"I knew there were no racial prejudices in the Air Force, because I remember in basic training there was this one lady in my room. She was complaining about the fact that she had to room with a black," she said. "Our (training instructor) got us all together in the dayroom. She preached to us for almost an hour. She kept saying, 'There is no white and black in the Air Force. You are blue! You say it. What color are we?' 'We're blue ma'am. We're blue ma'am,' Armwood called out. 'I want you to cement that in your mind.

There is no white and black in the Air Force. You are blue! You say it. What color are we? We're blue ma'am. We're blue ma'am. Now you dark blue Airmen go start cleaning the latrine.'

"Right away I knew I found my niche in life," she said.

A second major leap in gender equality came when President Lyndon B. Johnson signed Public Law 90-130 on Nov. 8, 1967. The measure opened women's promotions to general and flag ranks. It removed the ceilings of other ranks, plus it removed the 2 percent ceiling on the number of active-duty enlisted women.

By the early '70s, the WAF squadrons began to dissolve, separate dormitories remained, and the organization was replaced with the Installation Resident for Military Women, an additional duty for a senior enlisted woman on base.

Finally, in June 1976, the office of WAF director was dissolved, as women became integral members of the Air Force.

Many gain great praise such as retired Chief Master Sgt. Dorothy Holmes. In a September 1979 Airman article, Chief Master Sgt. Elmer Wienecke, senior enlisted advisor at the Air Force Academy had these words to say, "I can truthfully tell you that Dorothy Holmes is THE professional noncommissioned officer. If an Airman came up to me and said, 'Someday I want to be a Dorothy Holmes,' I would know that (they) wanted to be a chief master sergeant.

"I can go no further than to say she's what every chief master sergeant strives to be," he said.

"There are still barriers for women," General Vaught said during a 1998 interview. She said that young women [in that day] needed to look around and see all problems aren't solved. "They haven't really looked around them and don't really understand that all the problems are not solved.

"If they've just come into the military, they may believe there isn't any discrimination. But as they get a little further downstream, they'll get a little wiser and understand how discrimination is practiced today versus another time," she said. "But, it's still so much better than it was when I joined the Air Force in 1957. There's a greater acceptance - respect - today, and women are here to stay."

STORY BY SGT. MATTHEW BATES ✪ PHOTOS BY SGT. DESIREE N. PALACIOS ✪ DESIGN BY G. PATRICK HARRIS

WASP NEST

MUSEUM HONORS THE MEMORY, SACRIFICES OF THE FIRST FEMALE MILITARY PILOTS



When Betty Jo Reed was introduced to flying, it was love at first sight.

She was six years old and her father paid a dollar for her to take a ride in a Ford tri-motor airplane at the local fair. Once airborne, she was hooked.

"I remember feeling free and happy and loving the whole experience," she said. "From that point on, I knew that I wanted to fly."

It was a good time to be infatuated with flying. Flight was still new and romantic. Airplanes were starting to roll off production floors at a steady rate and pilots were stretching the limits of flight and teasing the imaginations of children and adults on a regular basis.

Some of these pilots even made an impression on her.

"Charles Lindbergh was trying to make the first transatlantic flight, and every time I heard an airplane flying over our house, I would run outside, waving and yelling, 'Hi Lindbergh,'" she said.

She doesn't do much running these days and, at 85, her flying days are also behind her. But while time may have taken her ability to

move fast or sit in the cockpit, one thing it left untouched is her love affair with flight — a love affair that drove her to become one of the first women to fly a military aircraft.

Betty Jo, whose last name then was Streff, was a member of the Women Airforce Service Pilots, a unique corps of women pilots who were trained by the U.S. Army Air Forces to fly military aircraft. The training took place at a small airfield called Avenger Field in Sweetwater, Texas.

"I was part of the seventh class of 1944," said Streff-Reed. "We were a tight knit group of girls, too."

In all, 1,074 women graduated from this training and earned the WASP title — a title that carried considerably less weight in those days then it does now.

"I was assigned to a unit in Mississippi," said Streff-Reed. "Right from the start, the boys there made it pretty clear we weren't wanted."

This didn't bother her too much, though. As far as she was concerned, every day she was able to climb into the cockpit and take off was a good one.

"Flying was freedom, and I loved flying," she said. "I loved my job, and I wouldn't have wanted to do anything else."

She spent her time in Mississippi performing maintenance flights. Once an airplane was repaired, she took it up to ensure the plane worked the way it should.

It was a great time, and she was happy.

Then, just as fast as the program was started, in December

of 1944, it was deactivated, and the WASP were told to go home.

"That was so disappointing," she said.

"Some of the men were returning from the war [World War II], and the Army decided it didn't need us anymore."

But the service couldn't deny the fact that these women had performed tremendously. During the war, WASP flew more than 60 million miles of operational flights from aircraft factories to ports of embarkation and military bases, towing targets for live anti-aircraft artillery practice, simulating strafing missions and transporting cargo.

Between September 1942 and December 1944, more than 50 percent of the ferrying of high-speed pursuit aircraft in the continental United States was carried out by the WASP. The women also flew all 77 aircraft in the Army Air Force arsenal, either in training or while in service. Thirty-eight were killed during the period the program was active.

Few people know these statistics; fewer still know how important the WASP were to



Betty Jo Streff-Reed poses with an old picture of herself while wearing her service uniform. Mrs. Streff-Reed was a member of the Women Airforce Service Pilots from January to December 1944.

Courtesy photo

Betty Jo Streff-Reed stands beside an aircraft that she flew. Mrs. Streff-Reed was a member of the Women Airforce Service Pilots and served from January to December 1944.





Mary Alice Vanderventer poses next to her photo displayed at the National Women Airforce Service Pilots World War II Museum in Sweetwater, Texas. The city of Sweetwater is the home of Avenger Field, one of the locations the WASP trained to become pilots.

the military at that time. Still, the program showed the world that women could sit in the cockpit and fly just as well as their male counterparts – war or no war.

In a career in which the door was typically slammed shut on women, a crack had suddenly appeared. The WASP opened the eyes and hearts of people across the country, and women everywhere began idolizing the WASP and looking to them as heroes.

Mrs. Streff-Reed doesn't see it that way, though.

"Oh, they call us pioneers and heroes," she said. "But I don't feel like either. We were just doing what we loved to do and jumped at the opportunity to do it. We weren't thinking how we would impact the world, just that we'd be flying some real fun aircraft. We didn't feel like heroes at all."

History disagrees with her. History books tell the tale of Streff-Reed and her WASP sisters, painting them as pioneers, even legends. The Air Force, too, recognizes their contributions to the service and even includes a section about them in the Professional Development Guide, a book used by enlisted Airmen to prepare them for promotion.

But aside from a few words scattered across the pages of history books and the personal accounts of these women, there was little recognition. It wasn't until 1977, that they were granted veteran status. There was no shrine to honor them, no place where the WASP were immortalized, no building that housed their memory and reverently sought to keep it alive. Then, in 2005, that all changed.

Nancy Parrish, daughter of WASP Deanie

Parrish, set out to create a museum dedicated to her mother and all the other pilots. With the help of local residents and city government officials, the National WASP World War II Museum was officially opened in May 2005. Fittingly, the museum was housed where it all began — on Avenger Field in Sweetwater, Texas.

Located in a 1929-style hangar, the museum is full of WASP memorabilia. Old uniforms, model aircraft, a re-creation of the women's living quarters and training equipment used by the women are all on display, surrounded by hundreds of photos and memories so real they almost seem to come alive.

This is fine, though. Keeping memories alive is the main reason the museum exists.

"The museum seeks to educate and inspire every generation with the history of the WASP, the first women in history to fly America's military aircraft, and who forever changed the role of women in aviation," said Marianne Wood, the museum's director.

So now Mrs. Streff-Reed and her fellow WASP have a shrine, a place to honor them and to forever keep their spirit, their dedication and their accomplishments alive.

She can't run these days. But if she could, she would run through the museum, from photo to photo, and reminisce about "the good ol' days."

Time may have taken her legs, but it does not own her heart – and her heart belongs to flight.



Betty Jo Streff-Reed and Mary Alice Vanderventer hold models of the aircraft they flew during their time as Women Airforce Service Pilots at Avenger Field in Sweetwater, Texas. Mrs. Streff-Reed is holding an AT-6 Texan and Mrs. Vanderventer is holding a Stearman PT-17 Kaydet. The two friends graduated in the same class of WASP training, 44-W-7, the seventh class of 1944.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY STAFF SGT. DESIREE PALACIOS

FULFILLING A DREAM



Staff Sgt. Desiree Palacios takes a self-portrait while on an assignment at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. Working as a military photojournalist, Sergeant Palacios has a chance to go to many unique places and meet a diverse group of men and women.



Betty Jo Streff-Reed, wearing her service uniform, poses for a picture at Avenger Field in Sweetwater, Texas. During a recent assignment, Staff Sgt. Desiree Palacios met the Women Airforce Service Pilot as she recalled her days as a female pilot. Mrs. Streff-Reed was a WASP from January to December 1944.

It was a sunny day in Sweetwater, Texas, in 1944. A steady breeze flowed over her face as her scarf twirled in the wind. Sitting in the cockpit of a Stearman biplane for the first time in her life, with adrenaline pumping, this young woman was about to fulfill a lifelong dream, one she held dear since she was a little girl: to pilot an aircraft.

During a recent assignment for Airman magazine, I realized that the Air Force is allowing me to fulfill my dream. It was a meeting with one of the most fascinating women in aviation history at the Women Airforce Service Pilots museum that reminded me how lucky I am.

Mrs. Betty Jo Streff-Reed, who prefers to be called by her given name, was one of 1,074 women called to duty with the historic Women Airforce Service Pilots, or WASP. On the day she climbed behind the controls of that Stearman, she said, she was just an average Texas girl with big dreams. But, with her tenacious spirit, she wasn't going to let anyone or anything stand in the way of her goals. I really admire that in her.

Recalling her time as a WASP, Betty Jo said she didn't feel like she was making any difference in history. She was flattered when people started calling her a pioneer,

especially for women in the Air Force.

I found it interesting that someone, without even realizing, could make such an impact. Because she was so caught up in her love of flight, Betty Jo didn't realize until much later that she and the other WASPs were paving the way for women in the future.

As I photographed her and listened to her speak, I kept comparing my passion for photography with her passion for flight. I noticed that the military has given us both the opportunity to pursue and fulfill our dreams. Before I became a military photojournalist, I never thought I would have the kinds of opportunities the military has already afforded me in the nearly seven years since I began my career.

Many people think all I do is push a button. Anyone could do that, right? Really, it's way more than that, to me.

I'm not just a photographer; I'm a storyteller. I tell people's stories through images. My goal with every assignment is to let viewers imagine themselves in someone else's shoes. I strive to give viewers the facts and let them decide how they want to interpret the images.

Betty Jo was just accomplishing her goals, for that brief moment in history. When the WASP program came to an

end in December 1944, she didn't give up on her love of flying. With persistence, she secured a job as a mechanic for the Douglas Aircraft Company. Not long after she started with Douglas, however, an automobile collision left her paralyzed. She remained in the hospital for 12 weeks. With the help of her mother, and a higher calling, she learned to walk again.

Betty Jo, not to be deterred, re-qualified, passed a flight physical, and in 1946, resumed flying.

From this inspirational pioneer, I learned there is no limit to what a person can do with her life. I learned not to settle and not to lose determination.

She proved to me that just because someone says you can't do something, doesn't mean you can't do it. It just means you have to try harder. Someone reading this article may one day be called a pioneer, someone who loves her Air Force career and has the perseverance and determination to follow her dreams.

Betty Jo is a pioneer, and more than that, an example for this woman pursuing her dream in the Air Force.

Desiree O. Palacios

March

Women's History Month



Airman

THE FINAL FRAME



FRIGID FIGHTERS

photo by ABNER GUZMAN

Maintainers assigned to the 62nd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron make their way across the flightline at McChord Air Force Base, Wash., during a rare Pacific Northwest snowstorm.

Airman