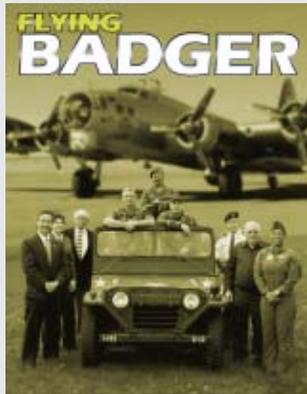


# FLYING BADGER

440th Airlift Wing, General Mitchell ARS, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

December 2005 Volume 57, No. 12





Veterans reminisce at Generations of Honor (see pages 3-5)

photo by Senior Airman Chris Hibben

## The Flying Badger

December 2005

Volume 57 Number 12

Contents of the Flying Badger are not necessarily the official view of, or endorsed by, the U.S. government, Department of Defense or Department of the Air Force. Content is compiled, originated and developed by the Public Affairs staff of the 440th Airlift Wing, Air Force Reserve Command.

**Wing Commander**  
Col. Merle D. Hart

**Director, Public Affairs**  
Dennis J. Mehring

**Wing Chief, Public Affairs**  
Maj. Ann Peru Knabe

**Public Affairs Staff**  
Capt. Keith Leistekow  
Tech. Sgt. Steve Staedler  
Staff Sgt. Denise Quasius  
Senior Airman Deanne Perez  
Airman Amanda Hill  
Airman Erica Neubauer  
Ann F. Skarban  
Liz A. Stoeckmann  
Jo Ann Lindner

**Flying Badger Editor**  
Tech. Sgt. Steve Staedler

**Office of Public Affairs**  
440th Airlift Wing  
300 East College Avenue  
General Mitchell ARS, WI 53207

Phone: 414-482-5481  
FAX: 414-482-5913  
www.afrc.af.mil/440aw

# HRDC

## Are You Satisfied?

by Tech. Sgt. Keith Battles  
440th Airlift Wing

Ask anyone at the 440<sup>th</sup>, be they civilian, Air Reserve Technician (ARTs) or traditional reservist, what the Human Resources Development Council (HRDC) is, or what its purpose is, and a puzzled look will probably cross that person's face. The name seems to add to the confusion.

HRDC is often associated with the word "diversity." When people hear this word they usually assume that the council is focused on issues of race. This is not entirely accurate.

A training class on HRDC in October at Robins AFB, Ga., cleared up many of the misconceptions about HRDC. For starters, HRDC is not an affirmative action or quota initiative. Rather, the purpose of HRDC is to advise and make recommendations to the chief of the Air Force Reserve on any and all matters pertaining to the human resources within the command. Our areas of interest include, but are not limited to: work force development, diversity, career development, assignments, and promotion opportunities. HRDCs strive to change the working atmosphere of a base. To have an environment of "...inclusion, mentoring and diversity in the long-term best interests of the command."

**How does a cultural shift take place?** It happens by giving people opportunities for advancement, education and increasing responsibilities.

AFRC Command Chief Master Sgt. Winsett Jackson says opportunity is manifested by mentoring.

"If you as a senior master sergeant have not identified a master sergeant to mentor; and you, as a master sergeant haven't identified a technical sergeant to show the ropes and so on, all the way down the line to the airman basic, you have done



yourself and the Air Force a disservice," he said.

A culture shift, however, is complex and has an ever-increasing number of variables. One thing that is clear is that the old way of conducting Air Force business no longer works. The education, skills, experience and capabilities of Airmen must come from a wider array of qualified people and these people must be retained.

**The largest category** of Airmen getting out of the Air Force and the Air Force Reserve are the "first-termers" who range in age from 18 to 25 years-old. They typically have less than five years of total service.

One of their chief complaints is that they did not feel as if they were valued, mentored or adequately trained on their responsibilities. This obligation falls on the shoulders of the commander, officers and senior enlisted people. If we sign-up young Airmen and then let them flounder, leading them to feel dissatisfied and disappointed, we've failed.

That's why the human resources councils are involved in so many programs and activities to increase representation, retention and participation. This is also why our recruitment net is being cast far and wide into communities - to attract

the best of the best. Currently, the Air Force Reserve has associations with the Tuskegee Airmen, Inc., for African-Americans interested in aviation; the League of United Latin American Citizens, Women in Aviation, and the Federation of Asian-Pacific American Council.

**Civilians and ARTs** play a vital role in how a base functions. They have their own unique obstacles and challenges that the reservists rarely see. These issues need to be raised and better understood; civilians need to be on HRDC councils to ensure that more comprehensive outreach initiatives are established.

**The commander** and his staff are also needed. Active and engaged HRDC's are mandated with making the command staff aware of issues, which negatively impact the efficiency of a unit or base, and offering viable solutions. Their membership and input on HRDC councils is absolutely vital.

It's easy to dismiss HRDC's as just "another meeting," but take a look around at your community and your job. So ask yourself: are you satisfied? If not, become involved in your local HRDC and become an agent of change.

### 440th Airlift Wing - Go Figure

1,165  
Number of enlisted Airmen

185  
Number of officers

24.4  
Percentage of wing with college degrees

6  
Percentage of wing with advanced college degrees



**Above:** Retired Air Force Master Sgt. Tim Wilkinson shares his stories of survival on the streets of Somalia in 1993 to more than 130 reservists attending Generations of Honor during the November UTA in Heritage Hall. **Below:** Jim Krucas, a captain in the U.S. Army during World War II, recalls fighting the Germans throughout Europe. The men were joined by seven other veterans for the event (see pages 4-5).

# The Greatest Generations

Veterans' stories of struggle and triumph inspire next generation of heroes

by Tech. Sgt. Steve Staedler

Looking at pictures of himself some 30 years ago carrying a backpack weighing nearly 100 pounds, U.S. Army Capt. David Serikaku remembers that day in Vietnam as if it happened yesterday.

"You can see the way I'm leaning over," he says of the photograph showing him trying to support the weight. "That was heavy...those were the days."

Captain Serikaku was joined by eight other veterans who shared "their days" of war and personal

battle at Generations of Honor, a program for junior enlisted and officers of the 440th Airlift Wing to hear firsthand accounts of the veterans' personal experiences with war, conflict and heroism.

"Since many of our younger members are being activated, the knowledge and advice of veterans that have gone before is very valuable to them," said 440th Public Affairs Capt. Keith Leistekow, who organized the event with Lt. Colonels Joe Almodovar and Larry Guenther.



photos by Tech. Sgt. Pat Kuminecz



**Capt. Jim Krucas, U.S. Army  
World War II**

What I took away from the military is that you have to set the example. If you trust your men and they trust you, that trust stays forever. It was tough over there, but I survived.



**2nd Lt. Patty Birschbach  
34th Aerial Port Squadron  
Cancer Survivor**

It was an awakening event that allowed me to put a face on history and courage to a soul. You can't really appreciate these particular situations until it happens first hand, but we can do our best to pass on lessons and experiences with others.



**MSgt. John  
440th Security Squadron  
Operation Iraqi Freedom**

One of the things I took away from my time in the military is the will of the people. What they've been willing to sacrifice so far and for the foreseeable future in the pursuit of freedom is remarkable.



**MSgt. Andrea McClam  
95th Airlift Squadron  
Hurricane Katrina**

So often what we're called upon to do is help people from different countries. It was just good to do what I do with the military for fellow Americans. We were helping our own people in need.

# GENERATIONS ARE

**Lt. Col. Harry Heflin, 440th Airlift Wing  
Operation Enduring Freedom**

Winning the global war on terrorism requires more than winning on the battlefield. In Afghanistan, it is helping the Afghan people turn their hope of having physical, social and economic freedom into reality.



**Pvt. Dick Havlik, U.S. Army  
Korean War**

The thing that stood out for me over there was seeing all the kids. Many of them had no parents, no homes and were begging for food. That really got to me and it's the thing that sticks in my mind about Korea.



**SMSgt. Ernie Logemann  
440th Maintenance Squadron  
Desert Shield/Desert Storm**

During my deployment I realized the importance of what we were doing there. I also realized the importance of the little things we, here in the United States, take for granted every day.



**Drossel  
Forces Sq.  
Freedom**

...gs I took  
...ime there  
...ne Iraqi  
...ng to  
...ole future  
...rnable.

**MSgt. Tim Wilkinson, U.S.A.F (Ret.)  
Somalia**

We had a bad day, we had a bad couple of days, but it gave me such a great appreciation of those who had gone before me and the sacrifices they had made.



**Capt. David Serikaku, U.S. Army  
Vietnam War**

It was very rewarding to be there. I enjoyed taking care of people, helping out, making a difference. And that's why I went into the medical field afterwards and became a nurse.



*illustration by Senior Airman Chris Hibben*

# OUND THE WORLD

# Falling for Civic Patriotism

Seventeen Milwaukee area civic leaders flew on a 440th Airlift Wing C-130 to the 914th Air Reserve Station at Niagara Falls, N.Y., Nov. 2-3. The tour provided the civic leaders with a better understanding of the Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard missions by touring on-base facilities and aircraft static displays. The civic leaders also visited the Niagara Aerospace Museum, Niagara Falls State Park, and Old Fort Niagara, a military fort that dates back to the earliest days of European exploration in North America. Civic leader tours are an official U.S. Air Force program designed to increase public awareness of Air Force Reserve roles and missions.



**World War II  
in the Philippines**

Japan launched a surprise attack on the Philippines on Dec. 8, 1941, just 10 hours after the attack on Pearl Harbor. Manila was fully occupied by the Japanese on Jan. 2, 1942.

American forces, along with a sizeable anti-Japanese underground organizations, fought the Japanese for the Philippines until Japan's formal surrender in Sept. 2, 1945.

132,000

Number of Philippino military and civilians killed during World War II

2,630,000

Number of Japanese military and civilians killed during World War II



**Above:** Staff Sgt. Patrick (Troy) Polson, a 440th Maintenance Squadron reservist, helps provide a measure of closure by returning a Japanese flag to the family of a soldier killed in War World II. Polson's grandfather had taken the flag from the soldier during the war. **Below:** Leon Lusby with his memento.

# Rising Sun Finally Sets

## Reservist's mission to return Japanese flag taken by grandfather as a keepsake in World War II gives tearful closure to family

by Maj. Ann Peru Knabe

More than 50 years ago during World War II, an American soldier named Leon Lusby shot a Japanese soldier in the Philippines. As was somewhat customary during that time, the young soldier took a memento from the victim's body, a Japanese flag that was folded inside the victim's helmet.

It was common for Japanese soldiers to carry their country's flag. This soldier's flag of the rising sun had greetings and best-wishes written from his neighbors and friends back home in Japan.

Predictably, the conscience of the young American soldier got the best of him, and decided he probably should not have taken the flag. But it was too late. Lusby carried the flag back to the United States, and vowed to return it to its rightful owners - the fallen soldier's family.

Forty years later, Lusby gave

the flag to his grandson, Staff Sgt. Patrick (Troy) Polson, a 440<sup>th</sup> Maintenance Squadron reservist.

"My grandfather's sole request was for me to return this flag to the soldier's family," said Sergeant Polson, who was living in Hawaii at the time when he received the flag. "I was determined to get this to the family one way or another."

He took the flag to the Japanese Embassy in Hawaii, but it was unable to assist. Several years later, Sergeant Polson moved back to Wisconsin. The flag came along with him.

Still determined to get the flag back to the Japanese soldier's family, the sergeant sought help from several Japanese students in his jiu-jitsu martial arts class.

Intrigued by the reservist's story, a student named Tomoko Kazama took the flag to her mother, who took it back to Japan. There, an agency took pictures of the flag

and translated the words on it.

For more than a year, the flag remained in Japan with Kazama's mother. Sergeant Polson figured the flag was lost. By chance, Sergeant Polson ran into Kazama in 2004, and asked what had happened to the flag. The Kazama family mailed the flag back.

Three months later, he received an e-mail stating the fallen soldier had been identified as T a r a o Yanihahara, and his sister Michiko had been located.

Sergeant Polson immediately made plans to return the flag to the family.



In June of 2005, the maintenance reservist flew to Japan to fulfill his grandfather's final request. He traveled by train through the mountains to Minami Alps City, where an eager Michiko was waiting for him with family members.

A woman in her late 80s, Michiko welcomed Sergeant Polson in a respectful ceremonial exchange of conversation through a translator. Tearful members of the Yanihahara family watched as she

accepted the flag that once lay under her brother's helmet.

"This was one of the happiest days of my life," said Sergeant Polson, who felt he had finally completed his grandfather's

personal mission of returning the flag. "After more than 50 years, I could offer him closure."

# Extra Credit Gives Extra Shot at Life

by Maj. Ann Peru Knabe

Three years ago donating bone marrow was the farthest thing from Maj. David Phillips mind. Then a captain, the civil engineer reservist was focusing on making it through Squadron Officers School at Maxwell AFB, Ala. When his instructor offered “extra points” to any SOS students who registered with the National Bone Marrow Registry, the reservist donated a small vial of blood and took the extra credit points.

**Imagine Major Phillips’** shock two years later when the national registry called to tell him he was a potential donor match for a person who was dying of cancer. Just three weeks after that initial phone call in November 2004, the registry called back and said they thought they had a better match from a different donor.

Although a little disappointed, Major Phillips went on with his life, not looking back.

“Never say never,” he said, “because the registry called again in June 2005.”

At the time, Major Phillips was training at an exercise called Silver Flag at Tyndall AFB, Fla. Remarkably, he happened to have his cell phone on when the registry called.

“They asked for another blood sample,” he said. “And two weeks later a package came in the mail with life insurance and disability policies that would be taken out on my behalf if I decided to donate.”

Undaunted by the paperwork, Major Phillips filled out the applications. He also underwent extensive medical testing to ensure he was an appropriate donor candidate.

By Oct. 2, the major was in Washington, D.C., ready to undergo the procedure.

The major’s bone marrow extraction differed from that of previous 440<sup>th</sup> reservists who had been “tapped” as positive donor matches. In most cases, a large needle was inserted into the donors’ hip bone, and marrow was extracted

in a painful process.

In Major Phillips’ case, the procedure took longer, but was less invasive with a quicker recovery.

**For five days** in a row, the major received two injections of fliqastim, a steroid that causes the body to overproduce white blood cells and bone marrow. On the morning of the fifth day, he received his last two shots, ate breakfast, and

was hooked up to a dialysis machine for five hours. A centrifuge separated the bone marrow, white blood cells and plasma, and then returned Major Phillips’ blood to his body.

While the reservist was still recovering from the procedure, a courier grabbed the priceless donation and ran out of the lobby of the medical facility, heading to a waiting cab.

An unknown distance away, a 32-year-old woman waited for her second chance at life.

“I was pretty excited about the whole process,” said Major Phillips. “How many times in life do you have the opportunity to save someone else’s life without really jeopardizing your own?”

The major described the donation process as a “minor inconvenience

when you look at the big picture.”

“The time it takes, and actual donation, are priceless to another human being,” he said.

If the recipient needs another bone marrow donation, Major Phillips is ready to give again.

“I am deploying to the desert,” he said, referring to an upcoming air expeditionary force tour. “But they told me they would fly me home if she needs more bone marrow.”

Major Phillips was recently notified the recipient is doing well. The patient also sent Major Phillips a thank you card – letting him know she appreciated his gift of life.

**“They asked for another blood sample. And two weeks later a package came in the mail with life insurance and disability policies that would be taken out on my behalf if I decided to donate.”**

**Maj. David Phillips**

440th Airlift Wing  
Office of Public Affairs  
300 East College Avenue  
Gen. Mitchell Air Reserve Station, WI 53207

PRESORTED  
FIRST-CLASS MAIL  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
MILWAUKEE, WI  
PERMIT NO. 1885

*To the family of:*