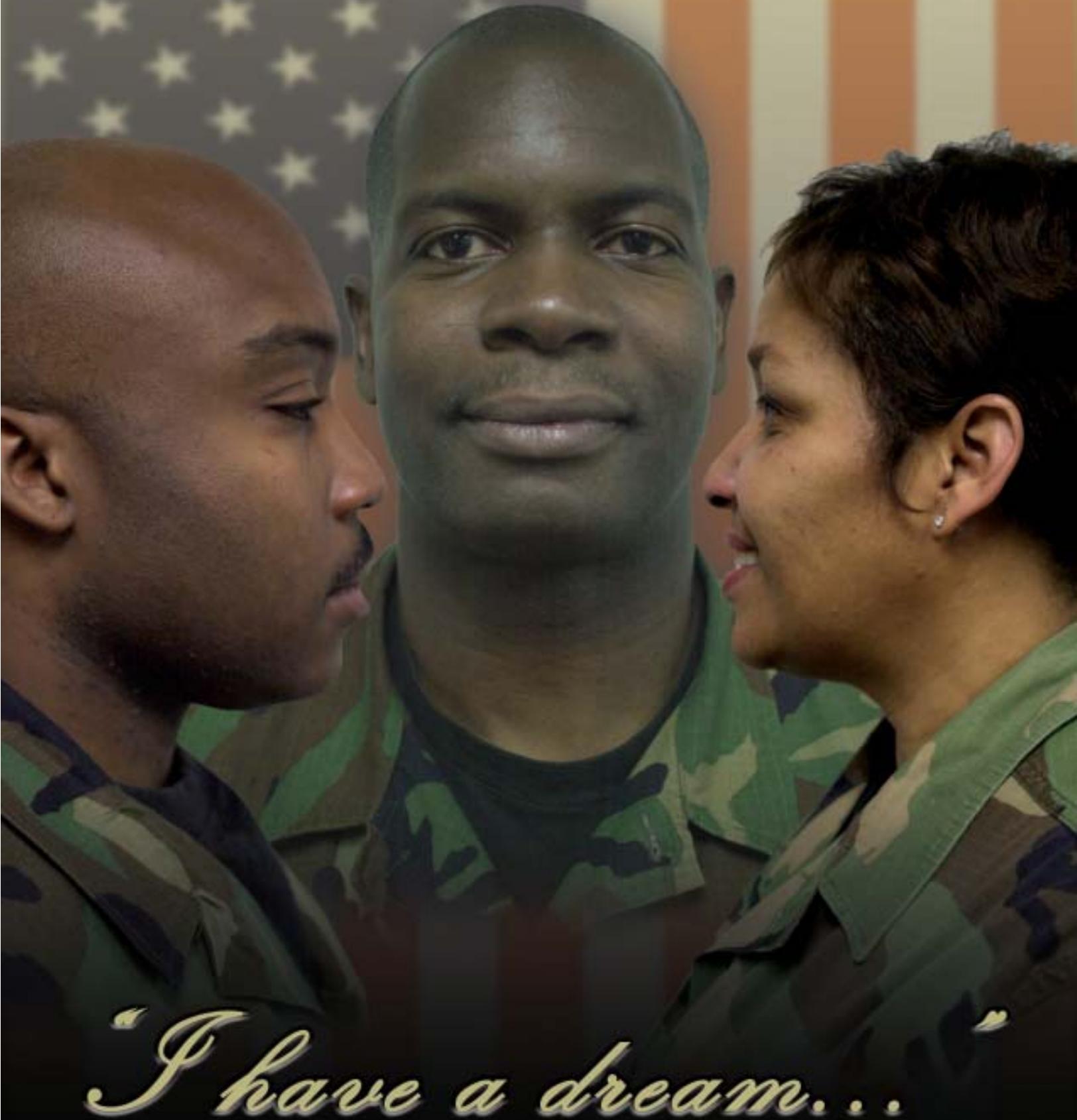


The Flying Badger

440th Airlift Wing, General Mitchell ARS, Milwaukee Wisconsin

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"I have a dream..."



illustration by SrA Chris Hibben

Black History month is a time to celebrate the contributions of African Americans. Pictured above (left to right) are 440th members Senior Airman Lamar Jennings, Master Sgt. Jay McClain and Senior Airman Dekole Branch.

The Flying Badger

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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
Ann F. Skarban
Liz A. Stoeckmann
JoAnn Lindner

**Flying Badger
Editorial Contact**
Melissa Kimball

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

Retiring chief offers tips for a long, successful Reserve career

Editor's note: Chief Master Sgt. Edward Thomas recently retired after 35 years of service in the Air Force Reserve. He started out in the Consolidated Base Personnel Office in Customer Service, and later worked in the Civilian Personnel Office, Personnel Utilization and Civil Engineers. Throughout his career, he worked with thousands of reservists. Chief Thomas recently shared his perspectives with the Flying Badger.

Flying Badger: What types of changes have you observed throughout your military career in the AF and Reserve?

Chief Thomas: The base itself has gone through many different changes over the years. I've seen major renovations and construction projects. The arrival of the C-130s, replacing the C-119s, the loss of our reservists in tragic accidents, the gain and the loss of additional aircraft and the subsequent manpower changes, the combining of the 95th APS and 34 MAPS, the constant realignment of CES, the growth of the SFS from a single civilian to a 24/7 squadron and the constant flow of new personnel through the front gate.

The long range changes? The Reserve isn't a "one weekend a month, two weeks a year" job anymore and it hasn't been for some time. The active duty Air Force has changed and has forced the Reserve to pick up the baton.

The good news is that the people are up to doing whatever it takes. Sure, personnel have left the military but the ones who have "stayed the course" are the ones we need.

I've seen the increase in the numbers of women in the Air Force Reserve. When I started, there were 10 or 15 on the entire base. They weren't allowed to fly the planes and there were very few in management positions. Both of those issues have been corrected, and the rate of change has increased, even in the military. Sure technology has

had a lot to do with it, but the people, their views and attitudes have rapidly changed too.

Flying Badger: How are these changes for the better?

Chief Thomas: The local changes seemed to have worked out for the best. We have a great work force, truly interested in what's best for the 440th.

In regards to the long range changes, you really can't tell if some of them will work out over time. For example, will the down-sizing of the active duty forces work?

Perhaps in the short run but can the Air Force continue to maintain it's flexibility and still do the multi-tasking on several fronts at the same time? Can we afford to let experienced personnel leave the Reserves with less than 20 years of service? Are we doing enough to keep them in? Is someone at some level asking: How long have you been in? Why are you leaving now instead of five years ago or five years from now?

Flying Badger: How have they made it more challenging? And how do we overcome and adapt to these challenges?

There seems to be an assumption that the Reserve is on duty 24/7. I've seen e-mails with a very short turn around, that require input from traditional reservists who we won't see for another three weeks.

In my opinion, the key to overcoming the challenges is to try and anticipate them and be prepared with the answers. Radar O'Reilly, the character from the series MASH, was able to do that.

In addition, you have to be able to adapt and make the necessary changes. And finally, you must question. Not everything all the time but you must strive to understand the reasons behind the decisions from the mundane to the policies set by Congress.



Chief Master Sgt. (ret)
Edward Thomas

Flying Badger: What advice would you offer a new enlistee who is just signing on the dotted line?

Chief Thomas: Enjoy the ride. Be as prepared as possible for the changes. Sometimes that means doing your professional military education as soon as possible. Sometimes that means you have to change career fields to get ahead.

Take the time to step back and look at your career and what you can do to improve yourself.

Flying Badger: Any closing thoughts on what people can do to make the most of their 440th career?

Doing your job and attending the UTAs is what is expected of everyone. That's why we're paid. But it's not enough. Lean forward and go beyond what is expected. Set your goals high but not so far that you can't ever reach them. Like President Kennedy said in his inaugural address, "Ask not what your country can do for you. Ask what you can do for your country." What have **you** done recently for your country, for the Air Force Reserve, for the 440th Airlift Wing, and for yourself?

If I am ever asked "who are your heroes?" My answer will **always** be the men and women of the 440th.

Tanzi selected as AFRC vice commander

By 1st Lt. Lance Patterson
Air Force Reserve Command Public Affairs

ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga. – Maj. Gen. David E. Tanzi will return here in January to serve as vice commander of Air Force Reserve Command.

He will replace Maj. Gen. John J. Batbie Jr., who will retire after he relinquishes his post to General Tanzi on Jan. 21.

General Tanzi currently commands 10th Air Force, at Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base Fort Worth, Texas. Before that assignment, he was director of plans and programs at Headquarters AFRC, Robins AFB, from February 1999 to March 2002.

Other assignments include: commander of the 419th Fighter Wing, Hill AFB, Utah, from July 1993 to February 1999; commander of the 906th Fighter Group, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio, from July 1987 to July 1993; deputy commander for operations, and later com-

mander, of the 917th Tactical Fighter Group, Barksdale AFB, La., from December 1985 to July 1987.

As the vice commander of the Air Force Reserve, General Tanzi will oversee AFRC daily operations.

General Tanzi is a native of Hanover, N.H. He entered the Air Force through the Ohio Air National Guard in 1968 and earned his wings in 1970. A fighter weapons school graduate, he has held several supervisory and command positions to include serving as a squadron commander.

General Tanzi is a command pilot with more than 4,500 flying hours in several fighter aircraft. He flew combat missions over northern Iraq in support of Operation Provide Comfort II. The general retired from civil service Dec. 3. He is now a full-time reservist in the Active Guard and Reserve program. (AFRC News Service)



AFRC photo

Maj. Gen. David E. Tanzi

2005 Reserve Pay for Four Drills

Years of Service

	Under 2	Over 2	Over 3	Over 4	Over 6	Over 8	Over 10	Over 12	Over 14	Over 16	Over 18	Over 20	Over 22	Over 24	Over 26
O-7	888.80	930.08	949.20	964.40	991.88	1,019.00	1,050.44	1,081.80	1,113.20	1,211.92	1,295.28	1,295.28	1,295.28	1,295.28	1,301.84
O-6	658.76	723.72	771.20	771.20	774.12	807.32	811.72	811.72	857.84	939.40	987.28	1,035.12	1,062.36	1,089.88	1,143.40
O-5	549.16	618.64	661.48	669.52	696.20	712.24	747.40	773.20	806.48	857.48	881.76	905.76	933.00	933.00	933.00
O-4	473.84	548.52	585.12	593.28	627.24	663.68	709.00	744.36	768.88	782.96	791.16	791.16	791.16	791.16	791.16
O-3	416.60	472.28	509.76	555.76	582.36	611.56	630.48	661.60	677.76	677.76	677.76	677.76	677.76	677.76	677.76
O-2	359.92	409.96	472.16	488.12	498.16	498.16	498.16	498.16	498.16	498.16	498.16	498.16	498.16	498.16	498.16
O-1	312.48	325.20	393.08	393.08	393.08	393.08	393.08	393.08	393.08	393.08	393.08	393.08	393.08	393.08	393.08
O-3E	0	0	0	555.76	582.36	611.56	630.48	661.60	687.80	702.80	723.28	0	0	0	0
O-2E	0	0	0	488.12	498.16	514.04	540.76	561.48	576.88	576.88	576.88	0	0	0	0
O-1E	0	0	0	393.08	419.84	435.32	451.16	466.76	488.12	488.12	488.12	0	0	0	0
E-9	0	0	0	0	0	0	520.16	531.96	546.80	564.32	581.88	610.12	634.00	659.16	697.56
E-8	0	0	0	0	0	425.80	444.64	456.28	470.28	485.40	512.72	526.56	550.12	563.20	595.36
E-7	296.00	323.08	335.44	351.84	364.60	386.60	398.96	411.28	433.28	444.32	454.76	461.16	482.72	496.68	532.00
E-6	256.04	281.68	294.12	306.20	318.80	347.24	358.28	370.56	381.32	385.16	387.76	387.76	387.76	387.76	387.76
E-5	234.60	250.28	262.36	274.76	294.04	310.64	322.88	326.76	326.76	326.76	326.76	326.76	326.76	326.76	326.76
E-4	215.04	226.08	238.28	250.36	261.04	261.04	261.04	261.04	261.04	261.04	261.04	261.04	261.04	261.04	261.04
E-3	194.16	206.36	218.80	218.80	218.80	218.80	218.80	218.80	218.80	218.80	218.80	218.80	218.80	218.80	218.80
E-2	184.60	184.60	184.60	184.60	184.60	184.60	184.60	184.60	184.60	184.60	184.60	184.60	184.60	184.60	184.60

440th retiree shares memories of hope and perseverance as a black man in the Air Force

by Staff Sgt. Denise Quasius

Black History month is a time for remembrance and recognition of the struggles and triumphs of the African American community. The 440th Airlift Wing is fortunate enough to have a member, albeit retired, who is able to share a glimpse into the unit's history. While his story does not always paint a flattering picture of the unit itself, his perseverance and willingness to stand up for himself and his friends is a true testimonial of the courage and fortitude of the black movement.

Senior Master Sgt. Osbee Sampson was born in Milwaukee and joined the Air Force in 1953 at

age 16. His father, a Tuskegee Airman, was not overjoyed that Sampson wanted to join the military at such an early age. He dropped out of school and convinced his father to sign the papers allowing him to enter the Air Force.

Sampson completed basic training and was stationed at Lackland AFB, Texas. He recalled the first "pass" that he received to go into town in the south.

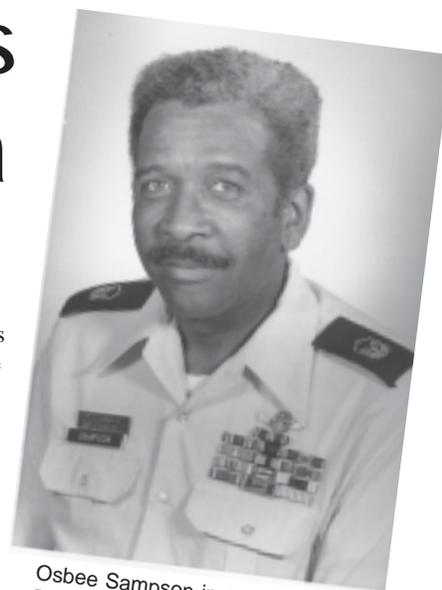
"I wanted to get something to eat, so myself and some friends, three white and one black, went into a restaurant," said Sampson. "My black friend was from the south and did not want to go into the restaurant he wanted to go somewhere else. But I said 'no let's go in here and

then we'll go somewhere else.' As they entered the restaurant the waitress took one look at me and pointed to a sign on the door that read 'No Blacks Allowed.'"

Sampson had felt subtle discrimination before in Milwaukee, but never the level of overt discrimination he found in the south. So he volunteered to go to Korea. When he returned to Texas, the discrimination angered him even more.

"I was over there fighting for someone else's freedom, and when I came back I couldn't even get into a restaurant or theatre," said Sampson.

In 1957 Sampson returned to Milwaukee and joined the 440th. He worked in aircraft maintenance, and



Osbee Sampson in an official Air Force photo taken before he retired

in 1967 he started flying. He logged more than 17 years active duty time and 6000 flying hours throughout the length of his career.

In the 1960s there were three black reservists with the wing:



photo submitted

Sen. Master (ret.) Osbee Sampson proudly watches as sons Osbee Sampson III and Kevin Sampson take the enlistment oath in early 1982. Osby told his sons the Air Force Reserve offered great opportunities for professional development. Both sons are still members of the 440th.

Sampson, James Sheppard and Edward Clay.

“We felt that there was a covert effort to get rid of us,” said Sampson. “We made a pact that no matter how bad it got, we would not leave.”

Sampson noted that there were a lot of black reservists that would come and go throughout the 1960’s. They didn’t want to put up with the discrimination. Sampson recalled that he got through those times by leaving his frustrations at the gate.

“I stuck around to see what they would throw at me next,” said Sampson.

There were times when Sampson feels that promotions were held up because of his skin color.

He recalls, “My friend and I were working on the plane together,” said Sampson. “My friend gets called up to the commander’s office and comes back an hour later with technical sergeant stripes on his sleeve. I asked him how he got those and he said ‘It’s automatic, once you’ve got 13 years of service in.’”

Sampson left the hanger and went up to the commander’s office, knocked on the door and reported in to the office. He asked the commander what the requirements were for promotion and the commander explained that he needed 13 years of service. Sampson looked at the commander and said, “Sir, what if you have 13 years in grade?” The commander looked up and told Sampson to go to clothing issue and pick up his new stripes.

When Sampson returned to the hanger with his new stripes he recalls that not everyone was happy for him. In fact, his direct supervisors were very upset about it.

Sampson recalls significant changes in attitudes towards blacks in the mid 1970s.

“There seemed to be more of an acceptance,” he said. “It was never something that happened overnight. You wouldn’t wake up one day and find that things had changed drastically, but an evolution was occurring and I was able to feel the subtle differences.”

Changes continued to take place through the late 1970s and 1980s.

“To look back over your shoulder at it it was hard to imagine going through it,” said Sampson. “I look



photo by Senior Airman Chris Hibben

A vital part of our community...

Today African Americans comprise about 8 percent of the 440th Airlift Wing’s force (2003 statistics).

back at some of the things that were said and you really didn’t say anything about it because you’re in your own world.”

Sampson encouraged his two sons to enlist into the Air Force Reserve.

“The reason I encouraged it was because of the camaraderie,” said Sampson. “Even with the individuals with bad attitudes there were those that were respectful and turned out to be good friends.”

Sampson feels that celebrating

Black History month is important for heritage. However, he does not use just one day or one month to educate. He has discussed issues with his sons and wife throughout their lives.

“If it is celebrated the right way it allows younger people to know what others have gone through or endured to sit where we are now,” said Sampson. “A lot had to happen and we need to know that. I go back to my association with the black community in the south. They

knew more about African American history than I ever dreamed of and I thought to myself, how do they know that?”

Sampson enjoyed and is still enjoying his time with the 440th.

“Treat the 440th like your second family, the amount of time you spend here makes it like your second home,” he said.

Green Bay Packers show support to Wisconsin Guard and Reserve units

Flying Badgers receive complimentary tickets to playoff game

Story and photos by Ann F. Skarban

The 440th Airlift Wing was the lucky recipient of 41 tickets to the Green Bay Packers Jan. 8 playoff game thanks to the generosity of the Green Bay Packers.

The tickets were given by the Packers as a show of support and thanks to Wisconsin Guard and Reserve units who have served in support of Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. The Green Bay Packers donated 300 tickets to military units throughout Wisconsin.

A drawing was held to select the recipients of the tickets on Thursday, Jan. 6. About 120 reservists who were recently activated and deployed overseas submitted their names for the highly coveted tickets.

"We are honored to be the recipient of this great reward and thank the Green Bay Packers for their generosity," said Wing Commander, Col. Merle D. Hart before he began reading names at the ticket drawing. About 40 reservists attended the drawing held at lunch time at the Drop Zone Club.

The 20 winners represented a number of units that have activated and deployed members.

Winners were randomly drawn from the 34th Aerial Port Squadron, 95th Airlift Squadron, 440th Maintenance Squadron, 440th Security Forces Squadron and the 440th's Civil Engineer Squadron.

"This is a wonderful going away present," said Tech. Sgt. Vincent Niemczyk, with the 440th Maintenance Squadron. Niemczyk was deployed to Southwest Asia from June to September 2004.

Niemczyk is scheduled to deploy to Southwest Asia for 90 days in early February.



Above: Right to left, Staff Sgt. Dave Hoover, 440th Security Forces Squadron enjoys the game with his parents, Bert and Joyce. Staff Sgt. Hoover was the winner of three tickets.



TSgt. Vincent Niemczyk, 440th Maintenance Squadron, enjoys his first game at Lambeau Field.



Col. Merle D. Hart, 440th wing commander, reads the name of one lucky ticket winner during a drawing on Jan.6.

34th APS Airman fights battle against enemy no one wants to meet

By Capt. Keith Leistekow

While members of the 440th and the other branches of the U. S. armed forces have been fighting the global war on terror, 2nd Lt. Patty Birschbach, executive officer for the 34th Aerial Port Squadron, came face-to-face with her own personal enemy right here at home—cancer.

Birschbach noticed that she was becoming fatigued and achy and then discovered a lump in her neck during the Labor Day weekend in September 2004.

"I immediately knew something was wrong," said Birschbach.

As the month of September pressed on, Birschbach found her body had become a battlefield. Doctors were unsure of what was causing her initial condition. Preliminary tests and X-rays were taken to check for possible infection. A lymph node was rapidly increasing in size and more symptoms became apparent. A CT scan revealed a tennis ball size mass underneath the sternum, that was pressing on her trachea and superior vena cava.

On Sept. 28, a surgical biopsy was done leading doctors to an official diagnosis of Non-Hodgkin's B-Cell Lymphoma, Birschbach said.

"This is when I first met my internal enemy and began my own war on cancer," said Birschbach. "I was shocked but did not break down until after I left the doctor's office. It was actually more difficult to tell my family and friends than it was to hear that I had cancer."

The biggest transition after receiving her doctor's diagnosis was stepping back from her busy career in the military and her civilian job in a medical diagnostic lab to become a professional patient, as well as a bit of a couch potato.

"I am loyal to both my professions and struggle to be content with a low profile at home," said Birschbach, "I keep my Air Force uniform in view at home as an inspiration to get better and as a reminder that 'successes' don't come easy."

So far, she has launched five chemotherapy and monoclonal antibody treatments against her enemy. Battle wounds include the loss of her hair, constant fatigue, sore eyes and headaches. She has also endured something called a PET scan (positron emission tomography) leaving her wondering whether she would start glowing or set off alarms. Birschbach also said that she has managed to harness her initial anger and use it as a "strategic weapon" to fight against her enemy.

She wrote this letter to her family, friends and co-workers on Nov. 9.

"Since I'm a Tech at heart, I like to analyze things and so I thought about this analogy regarding my experience. As I waited for a long train one night, I thought, 'Isn't this just like cancer? You are in a hurry (usually) to get somewhere and the crossing gates unexpectedly go down, forcing you to wait anxiously to get to your destination. Each car that goes by represents something different—diagnosis, treatment, surgery, courage, prayers, support, fear, love, denial, sickness, laughter, patience, uncertainty, friendship, family, healing and remission. When the gates go up, the travel to my destination continues.'*

Life changes in an instant, many times unexpectedly. I guess it's how you look at the journey [or wait at the railroad crossing] that really matters."

Birschbach had one more chemotherapy treatment in January and will begin six weeks of daily radiation therapy sessions in late February.

"As for my prognosis, the only thing I know is that my doctors' hopes are the chemo or radiation will kill the cancer. If this doesn't do the job, doctors have discussed the option of a stem cell transplant with me," said Birschbach.

"I'm not going to put unrealistic expectations on myself, but small steps will definitely improve my outlook. I continue to stay as fit as possible with yoga and walking, looking forward to the challenge of regaining my strength full-speed."

As for Birschbach's military career, she has and will remain with the unit in a military leave status until it is determined her cancer has gone into remission which she hopes might return her to duty sometime in Spring 2005.

Birschbach was managing a 200-person unit program for awards, decorations and performance evaluations for the 34th APS prior to being diagnosed. "I now work through phone and e-mail on military weekends to help in whatever way I can," Birschbach said. "The wing and my unit's members have been very supportive."

* *Editor's note:* Birschbach has 16 years experience working in the medical lab testing field. She is a marketing supervisor of safety in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin.



Photos provided

Former Tech. Sgt. Patty Birschbach was commissioned as a second lieutenant on April 23, 2004.

"I am looking at life from a different angle finding my relationships with family and friends becoming as equally important as I had been treating both my civilian and military careers. I am learning to rely on them more as I go through this chapter in my life. Battles in life, whatever they may be, are made easier by allowing the prayers of others and your own faith be your guide. No one can fight alone. I was and still remain overwhelmed with the prayers and good wishes...accepting them is like the forces behind the lines, waiting to take charge and assist."



Connie Potratz, a civilian co-worker, supports Patty's journey by having her own head shaved in November. Proceeds from the fundraising challenge went to the company's Relay for Life team.

TDY takes Pierce to Bosnia-Herzegovina

by Maj. Ann Peru Knabe

Col. Michael L. Pierce, 440th Airlift Wing vice commander, is wearing a different hat these days during his temporary duty tour at Camp Butmir, located about 10 miles from Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina.

As the senior military advisor for the commander of NATO Headquarters in Sarajevo, and commander of Detachment 1, 401st Air Expeditionary Wing, Pierce has a "fascinating" mission of defense reform complicated by the complexity of different commands and politics.

According to Pierce, reform of the country's ministry of defense is NATO's number one mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

"The ultimate goal is for the country to join the Partnership for Peace program, and then NATO," said Pierce.

The colonel's daily activities range from working with U.S. State Department political officers and attaches to meeting with Bosnian defense officials.

"Local customs add to the challenges," said Pierce. "For example, Jan. 7 was 'Christmas'

for the orthodox Christians. The following weekend was their New Year's Day celebration, and Jan. 20 was a Muslim holiday, and during all these days businesses were closed."

Equally complicating and complex is the structure that Pierce operates under. He works closely with the NATO Advisory Team, a group comprised of 15 international officers helping the country join the Partnership for Peace program.

The team is part of the Defense Reform Commission, a group of international agencies working on political and military issues. The commission's authority comes from the Office of the High Representative, which is the governing authority in Bosnia-Herzegovina until a democratic government can be established.

In addition to the government work, Pierce provides leadership for the U.S. Air Force members who are serving at Camp Butmir and Tuzla.

More than 40 nations have military personnel based at Camp Butmir.



photo by 401st Expeditionary Wing Public Affairs

In command...

Col. Michael L. Pierce assumes command from Col. Joseph Abbott of Detachment 1, 401st Expeditionary Wing. Pierce will command the Detachment which is based in Sarajevo, Bosnia. Pierce expects to continue the volunteer assignment through late Spring.

440th Airman recalls Pentagon attack

By Senior Airman Deanne Perez

While an exercise like the IGX can seem like a chore to some, it is an event that prepares Airmen for real world issues they might encounter.

Just ask Capt. Michael Schaefer, 440th Logistics Readiness Squadron.

At 29, he's been around the world and lived in major cities from New York to Tokyo, and credits the military with those opportunities. What he didn't expect in the process was a life-altering event that would keep everything in perspective for the rest of his life. Schaefer was stationed in Washington D.C. and working at the Pentagon on Sept. 11, 2001. He was just one corridor away from the section of the Pentagon that was struck by the hijacked airliner.

"The Pentagon is the last place you'd think of being attacked," Schaefer said. "It's the heart of the military."

But the reality of the day didn't hit immediately. The section of the Pentagon that was hit had recently been reinforced during a renovation project – a project that many believe saved people's lives.

"I think if there's one thing that a lot of the people in the Pentagon lucked out on is they hit a side of the building that was being renovated, so it wasn't a fully populated area," Schaefer said.

Although the impact was just a corridor away, to Schaefer it felt like the vibration caused when a semi-truck drives by a house.

"Honestly we didn't think anything of it when it happened," Schaefer said. "For all I knew there was a truck that was bringing supplies into the Pentagon downstairs."

Although Schaefer describes a "calm confusion" among the people that day, he feels the event remains a bit unexplainable because nothing

of that magnitude had ever occurred before.

"Maybe one of the hardest things for people in the Pentagon was being unprepared," Schaefer said. "I don't think it gets any easier if it's in a war zone versus not being in a war zone, but just not expecting [an attack] to ever happen in a place like that."

Airmen have been trained to expect the unexpected. And while 440th members can take much away from exercises like the IGX, the same attention should be given to the ancillary training that is required annually.

"The hardest thing about Sept. 11, was Sept. 12," Schaefer said. "We had to come back to work the next day and the building was still on fire... They weren't even sure if people were still alive under the rubble. It's humbling to see that you could've been one of them or how close you were to being one of them."

More money for college

Reservists activated to fight the war on terror can get more money for college through the Selected Reserve Montgomery GI Bill.

Full-time students normally draw a max of \$288 a month. Full-time students activated for 90 days to a year can draw a maximum of \$402 a month.

Those who serve 1-2 years can get up to \$602 for 1-2 years. The amount goes to a max of \$803 for more than 2 years.

TSP catch-up contributions for 2005

Air Force Personnel Center's benefits and entitlements service team automated system is available for 2005 Thrift Savings Plan catch-up contribution enrollments. TSP catch-up contributions are additional tax-deferred contributions, separate from (regular) contributions. Eligible Air Force-serviced civilian employees may enroll for catch-up contributions online at www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/dpc/BEST/GRB/EBIS.htm or through the BEST phone system. The online system is also available through the Air Force portal at www.my.af.mil. For more information, go to the story on Air Force Link at <http://www.af.mil/news/story.asp?storyID=123009371>.

Portal allows Airmen to chat with friends, family

Airmen at home station or a deployed location can now send instant messages to their friends or loved ones whenever they have access to the Internet. The Air Force recently implemented the "Friends and Family Instant Messenger" program, available through the Air Force Portal.

The Air Force has offered instant messaging through the portal for more than two years though the chat was limited to Airmen and civilian employees only. Under the new program, Airmen "sponsor" friends or family onto the portal by entering their e-mail addresses into the system. The portal then generates e-mails inviting them to log on and get their own specially configured account. Airmen can have up to five people added to the system.

To use the online chat, Airmen first need to get an Air Force Portal account. To sign up, visit <http://www.my.af.mil>. For more information, go to the story on Air Force. Link at <http://www.af.mil/news/story.asp?storyID=123009448>.

Tax assistance for Reserve members

Income tax filing deadlines are approaching, and mobilizations and deployments have raised questions and concerns for reservists and their spouses.

The 440th Airlift Wing does not have a tax assistance center, but there are other options for members and spouses of those currently serving in a combat zone.

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance sites offer free tax assistance for low income filers (\$36,000 and below). Call (800) 829-1040 for locations or to get more information. Great Lakes Naval Training Base also has a tax center that offers free assistance and filing to all military members and spouses. Call (847) 688-4753 to find out more information.

Automatic extensions are available to anyone serving in a combat zone. Nothing needs to be done to claim this extension, but members or spouses can e-mail the IRS at combatzone@irs.gov. This e-mail address was set up specifically so that the IRS can be notified of persons serving in a combat zone.

Copies of IRS Publication 3, Armed Forces Tax Guide, are available in the legal office, building 102, room 118. The legal office can not complete or file returns, but some limited help is available. If you have a particular question about a tax matter, call (414) 482-5211 to schedule an appointment.

440th donates record amount of food to Hunger Task Force

The first sergeants of the 440th reported that wing members donated more than 2,500 pounds of food to the Hunger Task Force in 2004. That total is twice the amount of food that was donated in 2003.

Volunteers to serve longer

The commander of Air Force Reserve Command said Airmen volunteering for duty are leading his command's ability to support the war effort. However, changes are on the way to the amount of time people will be asked to be overseas.

Lt. Gen. John A. Bradley, chief of the Air Force Reserve and AFRC commander, said the days of reservists serving 15-day tours as part of an air expeditionary force may be over. He said the Air Force has allowed the Reserve to manage its requirements.

Now, it's asking the minimum time for reservists to serve in an AEF to increase to 30 days.

Phony BRAC lists circulate on Internet

The base realignment and closure process (BRAC) is underway and a number of rumors are being passed around including a list of bases that are being proposed for closure.

Current law regarding BRAC states that Pentagon officials must submit a list of military facilities recommended for closure on May 16, 2005. This list will be reviewed by another committee, with the final decision being decided in Congress in late 2005.

At this time, DOD officials are still gathering information and conducting detailed question-and-answer sessions about different military facilities, to determine which bases will need to be closely looked at. Unofficial lists have been circulating since January 2004. Officials expect that rumors will continue to circulate. This is the first round of base closings since the 1990's.

Phone cards for the troops

The brother of a deployed 440th reservist has established a program to buy phone cards for all deployed 440th members. People interested in donating money to buy phone cards for the troops can make a donation at any Bank One branch to the "Operation Phone Home" fund. For more information on a variety of "support the troops" programs contact the Public Affairs Office at (414) 482-5482.

Heritage Hall needs your memories, historical items

The 440th Heritage Hall is a one of a kind facility in the Air Force Reserve. Heritage Hall is walk through history from the beginning of military aviation in World War I to current operations in the Middle East.

Caretakers of Heritage Hall are looking for artifacts and pictures that reflect the 440th's history. They are also asking wing members to remember that history is made daily. To preserve that history, they ask that all 440th members returning from a deployment contact Heritage Hall members and provide pictures and items that show their unit and activities.

Also, to honor the 40th anniversary of the Vietnam War, they are requesting that anyone who served in Vietnam and is now assigned to the 440th, or any member that had a parent who served in Vietnam, donate photos, uniforms, personal items or other, memorabilia. Donated pictures and artifacts will be placed in the Vietnam display to honor their service. Interested donors should contact JoAnn Lindner in the Public Affairs Office (room 111, building 102) or contact Master Sgt. Mark Aragon at (630) 728-0808.

PEOPLE

Promotions

SMSGt. John Simpson
SMSGt. John Szydel
SMSGt. Mark Tranel
MSGt. Joseph Gaca
MSGt. Adam Henkels
MSGt. Richard Rischman
MSGt. Carmelo Treviso
TSgt. Ryan Arnold
TSgt. Keith Kieliszewski
TSgt. Jeffrey Milner
TSgt. Gary G. Wagner
TSgt. Heidi Zawistowski
SSgt. Charlene Conlan
SSgt. Marco Dasilva
SSgt. Robert Landeck
SSgt. Michael Michalek
SSgt. Urbano Rivera Jr.
SSgt. Kristopher Walkosz
SrA Shana Clausen
SrA James Dahlke
SrA Chris Michalski
SrA Eric Sanford
SrA John Sundara
A1C Amber Bullock
A1C Jordan Mudrock
Amn Dillon Briesemeister
Amn Kyle Kohnke
Amn Chris Schlembach

Awards and decorations

The following individuals have been awarded the Meritorious Service Medal.

Lt. Col. Liesa M. Roelke (third oak leaf cluster)
CMSgt. Phillip J. Dibb (first oak leaf cluster)
SMSGt. Joseph W. Johnson
MSGt. Susan M. Janusz
MSGt. Franklin P. Weiss
TSgt. Joseph E. Bluver
TSgt. John W. Erickson, Jr.
SSgt. James F. Popp

The following individual has been awarded an Air Medal.

TSgt. Michael P. Saskowski

The following individual has been awarded an Achievement Medal.

MSGt. Gregory T. Sielepkowski

Retirements

CMSGt. LeRoy J. Fleischmann
CMSgt. Phillip J. Dibb
SMSGt. Mark E. Button
MSGt. Curtis J. Baeb
MSGt. John P. Wenzel
TSgt. Ramon Saucedo, Jr.

Newcomers

Maj. James Frame 440 MDS
Maj. Marie Jules 440 AW
1st Lt. William Ellis 95 AS
MSGt. Gregory Benjamin 440 MDS
SSgt. John Cavallero 440 SFS
SSgt. Tamera Scott 440 SVF
SSgt. Gregory Wolff 440 MDS
SrA Benjamin Carlson 440 LRS
SrA Sean Everette 440 MXS
SrA Derek Hale 440 LRS
SrA Francisco Hernandez 440 CES
SrA Angelo Herrera 440 MXS
SrA Todd Kroeze 440 CES
A1C Jeremy Bauer 440 AW
A1C Denise Giebel 440 MXS
A1C Natalie Gootee 440 MXS
A1C Christopher Knight 440 MOF
A1C Elizabeth Loy 440 MXS
AB Dillon Briesemeister 440 CES
AB Dontrell Grandberry 440 SVF
AB Jennifer Griffith 440 AW

Opportunity: Command Chief slot

Reservists who are interested in being the next 440th Airlift Wing command chief may apply if they are a senior master sergeant or chief master sergeant. Interested candidates need to submit a biography, resume and cover letter. Letters of recommendation are optional. Packages need to be submitted to Master Sgt. Terry Harmon by close of business Sunday Feb. 6. For more information about the application process, contact Command Chief Master Sgt. Mark Biedenbender at 482-5402.

Opportunity: Public Affairs specialist

The 440th Public Affairs Office is seeking a writer to serve on the Flying Badger staff. The enlisted position also entails community relations and media relations. The ideal candidate needs strong interpersonal communication and writing skills. In addition, applicants need to be independent, motivated and customer-service oriented. Interested people should submit a resume and cover letter to Maj. Ann Peru Knabe at Ann.Knabe@generalmitchell.af.mil, or in person at room 111, building 102.

Opportunity for Fellowship and Chapel Worship Services

The 440th Chaplain's Office is sponsoring an informational meeting after signout on Saturday, Feb. 5, for reservists who want to join others interested in prayer, praise and spiritual growth. Roman Catholic Mass will be held Saturday at 2:30 p.m. in room 102, building 102.

Protestant services will be held Sunday at 7:30 a.m. in room 102 building 102. For more information call the Chaplain's Office at 482-5225.

Reservists may nominate outstanding employers for Freedom Award

The nomination period for the 2005 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Awards is now open! The nomination period for the 2005 Freedom Award ends Feb. 24. Military leaders are being asked to encourage their troops to nominate their employers for this prestigious award.

The Freedom Award recognizes employers who provide exceptional support to their employees who voluntarily serve the nation in the National Guard and Reserve. The award is the highest in a series of ESGR awards that include the Patriot Award, the Above and Beyond Award, and the Pro Patria Award.

The categories for the Freedom Award include: major corporations (100 or more employees), small corporations (less than 100 employees), and public sector (federal, city, state, municipalities, police and fire departments, or any entity funded by tax dollars). Reserve and Guard members may apply online at <https://www.esgr.org/employers2/onlineFormsFAP2005.asp>

New emergency phone number can be called from cell phones: 482-6911

The 440th Airlift Wing has a working emergency phone number that can be reached via cell phone. Dialing (414) 482-6911 connects the caller with the Fire Department Emergency Control Center. The old emergency number only worked from land lines.

Operation Angel Tree... Unwrapped

Operation Angel Tree, developed by Family Readiness, encouraged 440th civilians and reservists to donate Christmas gifts for children of activated reservists.

The children of Senior Airman Dawn Clare, 440th Mission Support Group sent the following thank you note for their gifts.

Dear Air Force Elves,

Thank you for the wonderful presents you have given us. We were surprised that we were getting presents from the Air Force! Our faces lit up like candles when we unwrapped those presents. We hope that you had a merry Christmas as well. Thank you so much!

Chris, Alex & Dru

XOXOXOXOXO

PEOPLE



Photo by JoAnn Lindner

Members of the Richard Bong Chapter of the International Plastic Modelers Society, visited Heritage Hall for the first time since it was dedicated in October, 2004. The modelers donated the aircraft now on display in Heritage Hall. Heritage Hall caretakers are looking for more artifact donations from 440th members. See announcement on page 9 for more information.

440th Employer Appreciation Day 2005 announced

The 440th Airlift Wing will host an Employer Appreciation Day on Friday, July 15. This is an opportunity for reservists to thank their employers and help them learn more about the Air Force Reserve and the 440th Airlift Wing.

Employers will tour work areas, take part in informational briefings and possibly take a C-130 orientation flight over Wisconsin.

To nominate your employer for this event, complete the application form. An Employer's Day package with complete schedule will be forwarded to each nominated employer. Contact Liz Stoeckmann via e-mail at Elizabeth.Stoeckmann@generalmitchell.af.mil with any questions. **(Limit one employer per reservist. Please return by June 14.)**

Official Employers Day Application

Type or print clearly.

Employer's full name: _____

Job title: _____

Employer's daytime phone number: _____

Company name and address: _____

Reservist (name, rank, unit): _____

Reservist's daytime phone number: _____

Return this form to:
440th AW/PA (Rm. 111, Bldg. 102)
300 E. College Ave.
General Mitchell ARS, WI 53207
(414) 482-5482

FINAL NOTES



Photo by JoAnn Lindner

A pair of Blue Angels visited Milwaukee on Dec. 15 to plan a visit to the city by the entire team, July 16-17, when they will be headlining an air show on the lakefront near the Milwaukee County War Memorial. Navy Lieutenants Shawn Swartz (left) and John Allison (right) were greeted on arrival by Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett and 440th Airlift Wing Commander Col. Merle D. Hart.

The Blue Angels are coming!

The Navy Blue Angels are returning to the Milwaukee area on July 16 and 17 as part of the TCF Bank Milwaukee Air Expo.

The 440th Airlift Wing will provide maintenance and security support to the demonstration team, as well as hangar and ramp space.

Admission to the two day event is free.

This event will feature not only the Blue Angels, but also the industry's top performers, aerobatic performances and fly-by demonstrations.

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

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