

Combat Airlifter

440th Airlift Wing, Pope AFB, N.C.

"Vincit qui primum gerit"

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"Still putting the air in airborne"

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On the cover:

Maj. Derek Poellet, 95th Airlift Squadron, is considered a "hybrid," one of the first 440th reservists to move to Pope Air Force Base, N.C.

photo by Staff Sgt. Joe Stark

Patience, professionalism a plus for first Pope UTA

by Col. Steven Rosenmeier
440th Mission Support Group Commander

The June 10 flag transfer ceremony was a watershed event for our wing. In many ways, though, that was the easy part. The October Reserve weekend will be just as important, maybe more so, as we in-process nearly 500 people at Pope.

Someone asked me if gaining that many people at a tenant location made me nervous. All I could say was no. "Why?" they asked. "That's like having 500 people show up at your rental house for dinner."

Again, the answer seemed pretty simple. It's not like having people to dinner. It's like having 500 people show up for dinner and move in. If you're ready, there's nothing to worry about. We're ready, so I'm not nervous.

In the coming days you'll see the schedules and plans many people worked extremely hard to create. The plans cover receiving aircraft, transporting people and baggage to lodging, moving people from lodging to the dining facility and units and back again, conducting mass in-processing briefings, and making sure everyone who should be on the aircraft bound for Milwaukee

makes the flight. Information Management specialists are working to create e-mail accounts ahead of time. Facilities await occupants and computers await users.

I salute Det. 2, the 440th Logistics Readiness Squadron, the 53rd Aerial Port Squadron, the 440th Mission Support Flight, the 440th Communications Flight and all the newcomers for all their hard work. I also offer special thanks to Lt. Col. Scott Brickerd and Capt. Leisa Szybist for co-chairing the group.

The 43rd Mission Support Group also deserves recognition. The MSG is working hard to provide the facilities and services we need to quickly "gin-up" operations. I can't tell you how many times I've heard "Let me know what you need" and "We'll do our best" come from the lips of 43rd Airlift Wing officers, staff sergeants and Airmen. Their support has been outstanding.

Will there be hiccups along the way? The realist in me says yes. A plan this big will encounter snags. You can help us sidestep and overcome these by being proactive and flexible. No matter what, the men and women of the 440th MSG will be striving to provide you unequalled support.

Oh, and could you pass the mashed potatoes?



New 440th Command Chief ready to start

Chief Master Sgt. Cliff Van Yahres will be there waiting to meet his Airmen on the October UTA at Pope Air Force Base, N.C. That's because Chief Van Yahres is the new command chief for the wing. A newcomer to the 440th, Chief Van Yahres came to Pope AFB from the 913th Airlift Wing, Willow Grove Air Reserve Station, Penn., where he also served as a command chief. Chief Van Yahres' Air Force career spans more than 30 years. He entered the service in August 1975 and spent most of his time as a transporter in aerial port squadrons. The chief recently sat down with The Flying Badger to talk about his expectations about joining the 440th.

FB: What was the appeal for you to come join the 440th?

CVY: We did a site visit to Milwaukee to see how the 440th was handling the BRAC process because we were beginning the process of closing, too. I had no intention of looking for a job with the 440th. But I was introduced to Colonel Hart and met a lot of folks up there. A little while later, Colonel Hart selected me for the job as your command chief. I welcome the challenge. It's a history-making event. I believe in the Reserve and the mission and its contribution to the total force concept. I'm looking forward to joining the 440th.

FB: What have you learned from being a command chief for the past 15 months that you'll be taking down to Pope AFB?

CVY: It's the age-old adage that people are our greatest assets. I really learned that when people are faced with adversities, like Airmen here in the 913th and much like the 440th folks with our bases closing, that their best qualities come out.

No matter how the chips are down, people in blue rise to the occasion. The pride in our unit, and the pride I'm sure in the 440th, shines through in everything they do. It's exemplary.

FB: It sounds like you're pretty excited about getting started with the 440th.

CVY: I'm just looking forward to working with a whole new group of people. I've been a member of C-130 units my whole career, and it's great to stay with this weapons system. For many of us this is going to be a whole different way of serving. Now we're going to have to get on an airplane and travel for a few hours to start a UTA weekend. It's another layer of commitment because of the increased demands to get to drill and back. But I'm really looking forward to it. This is going to be an exciting time in everyone's lives and I'm glad to be a part of it. I'm not ready to have up my suit just yet. I feel like I can still contribute.

FB: What are some of the new challenges facing us at Pope AFB?



CVY: We have to select first sergeants, establish an effective, proactive chiefs' council; and Top 3 organization. Most importantly, we need a strong recognition program. We have to get groups like these going. This is the first-ever of a reserve associate wing where the Reserve Wing is the lead unit – this is big time. So we'll need to put our best foot forward; look sharp and

act sharp. Satisfactory performance cannot be the norm. We'll have to perform our duties above that to meet our goals. The cool thing is that the 440th will be a true melting pot with the Milwaukee folks joining others from bases in the area. I think this is going to be a great experience for everyone involved and can't wait to get started.

Chief Master Sgt. Cliff Van Yahres
440th Airlift Wing Command Chief

Born in Rockville Center, N.Y.
 Enlisted in Air Force on Aug. 25, 1975.

Joined the 913th Airlift Wing at Willow Grove ARS on
 Dec. 6, 1984, as an air cargo loader.

Named 913th Airlift Wing Command Chief in July 2006.
 One year later hand-picked as 440th command chief.

Attended the State University of New York at
 Farmingdale, and Cornell University.

440th generates its first Pope "Tac" mission



440th aircrew members plan the wing's first tactical mission generated from Pope Air Force Base, N.C. From left, Navigator Maj. Chris Sedacek, Wing Commander and Navigator Col. Merle D Hart, Pilots Maj. Derek Poellet and Lt. Col. John Gorse. *photos by Capt. Jeff Bryant*

By Lt. Col. Ann Peru Knabe

As the C-130 spiraled down to the ground in the black of night, the dimly lit instruments glowed on the flight deck; there was no other ambient light. Using night vision goggles, 95th Airlift Squadron Pilot Maj. Derek Poellet and Aircraft Commander Lt. Col. John Gorse peered into the darkness and landed the aircraft into "enemy territory" on a dirt runway. Within minutes, aeromedical specialists from the 43rd Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron scrambled out of the back of the C-130, loading "wounded soldiers" onto the aircraft with engines running the entire time.

"The training simulated what we would do in a war zone like Iraq or Afghanistan," said Capt. Jeff Bryant, the 95th AS mission planner for the scenario. "We simulated taking off from a secure field, flew to a simulated combat zone at Holland Landing Zone on Fort Bragg, picked up "patients" and then completed an engine running on-load in the dark." The Holland LZ on the North Carolina base

made an ideal training location. Its dirt runways are relatively small, around 4000 by 90 feet, and it's not lit very well at night.

"The ground's not as stable as asphalt, but it's realistic training for the desert and other remote unprepared runways we could land on," said Captain Bryant. "Unimproved runway landings like this are further complicated by blowing sand, dirt and undulating terrain."

The aircrew's use of night vision goggles during the assault landing facilitated visibility in the darkness.

"We can mark the landing zone with covert lighting that can't be seen with the naked eye," explained Captain Bryant. "This helps in a real combat environment when you don't want the enemy to know where you are."

Col. Brett Clark, 440th Operations Group commander, agreed.

"Ideally the enemy can only hear the sound of the engines," he explained. "Because it takes time for the sound waves to travel, it's hard to identify

the aircraft's location in the dark. That means it's difficult to train fire on the aircraft, making it a more difficult target."

During the engine-running off and on-loads, the aircrew kept the engines running while the 43rd AES loaded patients onto the plane.

"This decreases the time the aircraft is on the ground," said Captain Bryant. "It also decreases the likelihood of maintenance problems."

During the recent tactical mission, the 440th aircraft was on the ground about 20 minutes. In a real world scenario, the actual ERO and patient loading would be take even less time. The aircrew and aeromedics both benefited from the 440th's first tactical mission originating from Pope.

It helps the AES Airmen stay qualified because it provides a realistic medical scenario, and it allows pilots to complete certification by landing on unimproved runways.

C-130 pilots are also required to complete two night vision goggle assault landings semi-annually.

"The 440th's first tactical mission originating

from Pope Air Force Base is really a historical event,” said 440th Wing Commander Col. Merle D. Hart, who served as the instructor navigator during the mission. “It’s symbolic of the missions and partnerships to come in the future.”

The mission lasted more than four hours. Navigator Maj. Chris Sedlacek ensured the aircraft landed in the specified locations at the Holland LZ.

Other aircrew members included Flight Engineer Tech. Sgt. Frank Mason, Instructor Loadmaster Tech. Sgt. Trip Loeslein and Loadmaster Senior Airman Matthew Marshall.

“The event was most memorable,” said Captain Bryant. “It was the first time some of our crew members flew on unprepared runways with NVGs.” 440th generates first tactical mission from Pope AFB A 440th C-130 lands on a dirt runway at Holland Landing Zone, N.C., in one of two engine running onload exercises during the wing’s first tactical mission originating from Pope Air Force Base, N.C.



Members of the 43rd Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron load a “patient” onto a 440th Airlift Wing C-130 during an engine-running onload exercise.

440th Maintainers keep C-130s flying

photos and story by Dennis J. Mehring

Everybody in the Air Force has heard the cliché about the heart of every flying operation being the maintainers because without them our aircrews are just pedestrians with cool jackets and sunglasses. Others, like the fuel truck drivers, like that joke, too.

All joking aside, aircraft maintainers are professionals that work in a number of disciplines and proudly accept the responsibility of keeping our aircraft safely flying. Look around the maintenance complex, crew chiefs perform regular maintenance, track the performance of “their” airplane and, when problems arise, they request assistance from the specialists in avionics, sheet metal, fuel systems, electrical systems, hydraulics, propulsion and nondestructive inspection just to name a few.

No single worker’s skill is more or less important to the Maintenance Group because it takes all of them working in concert to support the flying mission. Every hour spent flying is the result of many more hours of effort expended by those dedicated maintainers.

Aircraft maintenance at Pope Air Force Base, N.C., is going to look slightly different than at General Mitchell Air Reserve Station.

The ramp area is enormous and in these early stages of the transition, the maintenance officers and enlisted supervisors must work to build a cohesive team who come from varying backgrounds and not all of them used to work on “The Mighty Herk.”

Some were recently in the active duty Air Force, some are Reservists transferring from other units and many are traditional Reservists from

Wisconsin who’ve been working on these aircraft for almost 20 years.

The summer temperatures and humidity are higher and it is likely that no one can count on a “snow day” at any time soon. But that won’t stop the maintainers from working together to provide our aircrews with top quality airplanes that are second to none.

A good part of that team building is increasing levels of trust not only with our active duty counterparts but between each other also; and not too far down the road we can add a new dynamic with the prospect of being a tenant on an Army air base.

Whatever challenges lay ahead, the 440th Maintenance Group is focused on safely keeping ‘em flying.



Staff Sgt. Alan Hunter prepares to secure the landing gear doors to a wing C-130 on the Pope Air Force Base, N.C., “Blue Ramp” after receiving a high wind warning. Sergeant Hunter is a dual qualified C-130 crew chief (E & H models), a former member of the 43rd Airlift Wing, and the second active-duty airman to join the 440th Maintenance Group. He was stationed at Pope AFB for six years before he joined the 440th and the Air Force Reserve.

Maintainers hard at work



Left: Staff Sgt. Alan Hunter (left), 440th Airlift Wing and Senior Airman Alan Hitchings, 914th Airlift Wing pull the ground power cart cord to a 440th C-130 parked on the "Blue Ramp" at Pope Air Force Base, N.C. Airman Hitchings, a communications and navigation specialist, is performing temporary duty at Pope. His home base is Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station, N.Y.

Below: Staff Sgt. Alan Hunter and Senior Airman Alan Hitchings (right) unlock the crew door to a C-130 dedicated to the City of Oak Creek, Wis. Since the unit moved in June 2007, the 440th Airlift Wing's aircraft are now stationed at Pope AFB, N.C.

The 440th Airlift Wing is actively looking for people to serve as traditional reservists and air reserve technicians (reservists who hold a civilian job associated with their Reserve position). People who want more information about enlisting in the Air Force Reserve should call Master Sgt. Joann Shaw in Fayetteville at (910) 483-0083. Interested applicants who live outside the Fayetteville area should call Senior Master Sgt. Lonnie Taylor's office at (910) 394-9074 (DSN 424-9074) for information on the Air Force Reserve recruiter in their area. The 440th is also looking for qualified civilians in a number of areas. For more information on civilian job opportunities call Maj. Christian Bakogiannis at (910) 644-5024, (DSN 424-1986) or check the Federal jobs web site at www.usajobs.com <<http://www.usajobs.com>> .





People on the move

As quickly as 440th Airlift Wing, Det. 2, Airmen pack-up boxes, wing members at Pope Air Force Base, N.C., unload shipments from Milwaukee. According to Capt. Michael Schaefer, 440th Airlift Wing plans officer, the wing has moved more than "50 houses" worth of equipment and supplies since early this summer. Shipping most often occurs over-the-road on special storage units called MilVans that can be loaded on semis, but opportune airlift on routine training missions has also provided opportunity to ship 440th assets to the wing's new location.

Above: Airman 1st Class Melissa Dirnbauer, 34th Aerial Port Squadron, and Staff Sgt. Sean Stretch, 934th Airlift Wing, stack boxes full of files and folders headed to Pope AFB. Sergeant Stretch deployed the General Mitchell Air Reserve Station to help the 440th during the move.

Left: Senior Master Sgt. Laverne McCoy (left), 440th Services Flight, helps Chief Master Sgt. Karen Brandt, 440th Military Personnel Flight, and Col. Steven Rosenmeier, 440th Mission Support Group commander, unload boxes in the headquarters building at Pope AFB.



photo by Lt.Col. Ann Peru Knabe

The 440th Alumni Association wants you!

The 440th Alumni Association encourages 440th members and friends to join. In addition to information sharing, regular meetings give people the opportunity to stay in touch with fellow 440th members and stay current with the people and history of the 440th.

For more information, call Ed Thomas at 482-5303 or Larry Guenther at 482-5401 on base. More information is also available from Al Shutta at 414-282-9225 or James Anderson at 262-821-1841, or Ed Thomas at 414-427-8256 or Larry Guenther at 262-284-9779. The Association meets the second Thursday of the month at Amelia's for lunch and camaraderie. Amelia's restaurant is located at 724 E. Layton Ave. The 440th Alumni Association encourages 440th members and friends to join. In addition to information sharing, regular meetings give people the opportunity to stay in touch with fellow 440th members and stay current with the people and history of the 440th.

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Holy flyer! Chaplain joins 440 team



Capt. David Fink joined the 440th Airlift Wing on the August UTA. The chaplain is no stranger to the Air Force. He previously served as an Individual Mobilization Augmentee with the 43rd Airlift Wing, and, prior to that, served as a security forces specialist and loadmaster with the 109th Airlift Squadron in the Minnesota Air Guard.

He looks forward to building on his 13 years experience in the military with his new mission at Pope Air Force Base, N.C.

"It's exciting for me because I can build our chaplain program from scratch," he said. "I have a great opportunity to make a difference, provide spiritual care and direction for Airmen."

Chaplain Fink said he met some of the first 440th members that moved to Pope AFB last summer, and it had a lasting impact.

"Right away, I could tell the 440th had that family feel," he said. "It's great to be back in a unit program."

In his civilian life, Chaplain Fink teaches a course called Reformation Europe at Duke University, N.C. He also teaches in Duke's Divinity School and is working on his Ph.D.

"I enjoy the interaction with students; it keeps me on my toes," he said. Chaplain Fink is ordained through the Protestant Christian – Evangelical Free Church of America.

PASS-FAIL

Air Force modifies fitness test rules

by Staff Sgt. Monique Randolph
Secretary of the Air Force Public Affairs

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Air Force officials here recently announced a change to physical fitness test standards for all Airmen.

The "marginal" category has been eliminated, and the test will now be either pass or fail. Previously, Airmen who scored below 70 on the fitness test failed, and those who scored between 70 and 74.9 received a marginal rating, while Airmen who scored 75 or above passed.

With the change, a score below 75 is considered failing, and Airmen will have to retest within 90 days. "The change was made to support a defined standard for fitness testing," said Maj. Dana Whelan, the chief of health promotion operations at Bolling Air Force Base in the District of Columbia.

"With the implementation of the new officer and enlisted performance reports, we

needed to define a score that qualifies as meeting standards. Furthermore, Airmen who scored in the (marginal) range were not where the Air Force needed them to be (physically), and were still required to attend a healthy living workshop and retake the test to score 75 or above."

The fitness test change comes just weeks after the implementation of the new performance reports."

I applaud our Airmen who realize the importance of peak physical fitness," Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force Rodney J. McKinley wrote in an Enlisted Perspective.

"However, I realize there are also Airmen who are not living up to their health and fitness potential. With every Airman critical to completion of Air Force air, space and cyberspace missions, we need all Airmen physically capable of performing at the highest level."

Final Notes



A 440th C-130 takes-off from a dirt runway at Holland Landing Zone, N.C., in one of two engine running onload exercises during the wing's first tactical mission originating from Pope Air Force Base, N.C. Read more about the tactical mission on pages 4-5.

photo by Capt. Jeff Bryant

Lodging Information

Reservists should use the Automated Lodging Reservation System when they need lodging for Reserve weekends. Lodging for mandays or annual tour should be arranged by calling the Carolina Inn directly at (910) 394-4131. The toll free number is 1-888-AFLODGE (235-6343).

Travel Vouchers

Reservists are being warned that they should NOT turn their travel vouchers in to the 43rd Comptroller Squadron at Pope Air Force Base, N.C. All vouchers should be sent to the Det. 2 Finance Office at Gen. Mitchell International Airport Air Reserve Station, Wis., until finance operations are officially moved to Pope on Oct. 1. The 43rd CPTS has been instructed to return any Reserve vouchers received from 440th members. The only exception to this policy is civilian PCS vouchers which are turned in to the 43rd CPTS.

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