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Walkin' Joe

B-ball winners

MOHAWK

442nd Fighter Wing



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the water**

**Setting the
AF standard**

Air Force Reserve Command
442nd Fighter Wing Online

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March 2007

Tell your own Air Force Reserve story

By Maj. David Kurle
chief of public affairs

Over the past year, there has been an initiative from the highest levels of the Air Force to make “every Airman a communicator.”

The goal of this initiative is to get Airmen and Citizen Airmen to tell their personal Air Force stories to their own local communities – whether it be in form of public speaking, meeting with civic leaders or talking to the media.

In his latest Letter to Airmen, dated Feb. 7, Secretary of the Air Force Michael W. Wynne urges all Airmen to be “Ambassadors in Blue.” He states that sharing the Air Force message is “not just for our senior leaders and public affairs representatives.

“I encourage Airmen to engage your communities and their leaders with your personal stories of service,” Secretary Wynne writes.

I would like to draw your attention to the words “personal stories of service.”

The intention of this initiative is to make Airmen and Citizen Airmen comfortable with speaking to audiences in their local communities about what

they do in the Air Force and to talk about deployments or other experiences that don’t always get reported in the news media.

The key is for our wing members to “stay in their lane” of experience.

In other words, talk about what you do personally – your job, your squadron’s mission, and why you believe serving in the Air Force Reserve is rewarding.

Stay away from publicly stating opinions on national and Department of Defense policy. For example, answering the question: “What do you think of the president’s strategy in Iraq?” can be answered simply by stating that as Air Force Reservists we do not make policy – we carry it out, therefore it’s inappropriate for us to comment on it.

Our senior leaders, as well as our elected and appointed civilian leaders, are the people who make policy, so let them comment on it publicly. It’s not our job to defend their policy, nor is it our place to criticize it publicly – it’s our job to carry it out.

As your wing public affairs officer, I too would encourage you to go out into your communities and share your personal stories and why you remain in the service of your country to anyone who will listen – whether it’s an audience of one or 100.

My office has a multitude of tools to assist you in talking to small groups and even the news media, so stop by our office if you are invited to speak to either a group or a reporter.

I believe in and support this initiative to be “Ambassadors in Blue,” it could really make a difference in how people perceive and how well people support the 442nd Fighter Wing and the Air Force Reserve.

“I encourage Airmen to engage your communities and their leaders with your personal stories of service.”

— Secretary of the Air Force
Michael W. Wynne

Letter to Airmen

Michael W. Wynne
Secretary of the Air Force

7 Feb 07

Every Airman an Ambassador

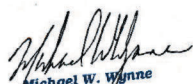
Delivering sovereign options for the defense of the United States of America, as well as her global interests, and winning the Global War on Terror are our Air Force’s most fundamental objectives. We provide the air, space and cyberspace capabilities necessary for Joint and Coalition forces to execute decisively, interdependently, and dominantly in every engagement. Our Air Force is unequaled in its ability to do so for one reason: the passion, talents, and ingenuity of you, our matchless Airmen!

Yet one of our most remarkable skills remains largely untapped and unrefined. I am referring to your service as *Ambassadors in Blue*, both around the world and in our communities here at home. Your actions, behavior, and words, both on and off duty, have a great impact on your host nation’s or local community’s perception of America and our Air Force. But these areas are not the only components of the *Every Airman an Ambassador* mindset we need to enhance.

Presently, over 200,000 of our Airmen carry out missions on a daily basis for Combatant Commanders around the world; of these, over 60,000 of you are stationed forward and more than 26,000 are deployed, working hand-in-glove with our international partners. We are truly a globally engaged force. More than ever, we depend on our allied Airmen to succeed, and they depend on us. We must fly and fight as one. We teach, we partner, we learn—and in building friendships, we build trust. America’s security today and in the future depends on building successful international partnerships, one Airman at a time.

Likewise, we must capitalize on your talent as *Ambassadors* to your communities here at home. As I related in the August 2006 Letter to Airmen, *Every Airman a Communicator*, sharing the Air Force message is not just for our senior leaders and their leaders with representatives. I encourage Airmen to engage your communities and their leaders with your personal stories of service, to share your views on the unique capabilities our Air Force brings to the fight, and to articulate what we need to keep that force strong and vital. One message, many voices; it is essential we communicate our role in fighting the Global War on Terror in addition to the Global Vigilance, Reach, and Power the Air Force provides the Nation across the strategic commons of air, space, and cyberspace.

As your Secretary, I am committed to boosting your regional, cultural and language skills to make you a more capable Ambassador so that you can help build lasting long-term relationships with our allies and coalition partners. At the same time, I want you to unleash your talents here at home, so that you can tell the greater Air Force story, share your personal Air Force story, and serve as an example in your local community. With *Every Airman an Ambassador*, America and its Air Force will shine as the protector of the beacon of freedom that is our nation!


Michael W. Wynne

MOHAWK

442nd Fighter Wing

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Charge-of-quarters

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Former 442nd member served as Missouri governor
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MASTER SGT. JOHN DAVISON
442ND MAINTENANCE OPERATIONS
FLIGHT SQUADRON

Call the CQ from on-base at 99-1 (660) 238-7428. From a local off-base number (i.e., Concordia, Warrensburg, Sedalia etc.), dial (660) 238-7428. To call toll free from off-base, dial (800) 260-0253 and press seven after the prompt.

COVER PHOTO: Capt. David Kirkendall, left, active-duty A-10 pilot, inspects maintenance forms with 442nd Fighter Wing crew chief, Airman 1st Class Jeremy Cline Feb. 11 on the Whiteman flight line. Pilots from Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany, are flying with the 442nd for three months. Airman Cline is on orders to help support the additional sorties. See story on page 6. (Photo by Maj. David Kurle)

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442nd Fighter Wing Tip of the Spear

SENIOR AIRMAN CRYSTAL CRAVER
442ND MEDICAL SQUADRON

Senior Airman Crystal Craver is a Medical Services Technician with the 442nd Medical Squadron. Airman Craver works in the optometry clinic as an interim optometry technician, in lieu of Air Force Specialty Code trained personnel. She mastered the duties of the clinic quickly with no interruption of quality care for wing members completing their annual optometry exam requirements.

Airman Craver also works as an aerospace medical technician. Her organizational skills and outstanding attitude enabled the medical squadron to process more than 60 physical exams during a Unit Training Assembly Saturday morning. She has also been a member of numerous shot lines to help wing members maintain worldwide duty qualifications.

Airman Craver was selected as a distinguished visitor escort for the Operation Patriot exercise at Ft. McCoy, Wis., in 2006. She maintained proper coordination of dignitary movement while observing the exercise and for her efforts was awarded the First Sergeant Diamond Award coin.

Airman Craver has recently received Missouri certification as a phlebotomist and as an emergency medical technician. She is currently pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree at Southwest Baptist University.

Airman Craver also volunteers her time as a basketball coach for Springfield, Mo., youth groups.

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March 2007



PHOTO BY MASTER SGT. BILL HUNTINGTON

Tech. Sgt. Calvin Carter, 442nd Maintenance Squadron Metals Technology office, makes some adjustments on the Wing's new canopy rigging fixture, a device he helped build. While the design of the fixture was more than 30-years old, it had never been built by the Air Force or the

A-10's manufacturer, Fairchild Republic. Sergeant Carter and his fellow maintainers overcame several design flaws in the original plan to build the device. His modifications have been adopted by the Air Force as the standard for any unit building a fixture for its A-10s.

The fix is in

442nd answer sets 'bench' mark for AF-wide A-10 canopy repairs

By Staff Sgt. Tom Talbert and
Master Sgt. Bill Huntington

When the 442nd Maintenance Squadron needs to repair one of the wing's A-10 canopies, they mount the Plexiglas domes on a work bench called a "canopy rigging fixture."

The problem is the canopy rigging fixtures they and other Air Force Warthog maintainers have had to use over the years are designed for F-16 – and not A-10 – canopies.

Now, thanks to the Air Force's edict to finally use the right rigging fixtures for A-10s, the determination of Master Sgt. Brian Bass, 442nd Structures Flight chief, and a Technical Sergeant in the Flight's Metals Technology shop able to take on tasks that would make television's McGyver panic, the Air Force finally has the right fixture for the job.

After a year-long effort, Tech. Sgt. Calvin Carter can now add inventor to his long list of accomplishments.

The Air Force decided in 2005 that the current model of fixture for rigging could no longer be used but they needed a workaround. They also had real doubts about finding a solution "in-house."

"They told us at a conference that no field unit had the expertise or capability to manufacture the proper fixture based on the old complex drawings," he said. "I begged to differ. Knowing we had people working in our shop with 20- or 30-years experience, I knew we could make it."

He also knew who could come up with a plan to make it happen so walked away from the apprehensive chief engineer and the active-duty personnel at the conference determined to prove the skeptics wrong.

"I call it the 'Carter Conversion,'" Sergeant Bass said of the Sergeant's plan. "(That is) based on just my confidence in Sergeant Carter's abilities and his ingenuity and willingness to commit to excellence."

When something is broken, it's not surprising when Sergeant Carter of the metals technology shop is called on to roll up his BDU sleeves and fix it. He was long familiar with the problems caused by using the F-16 canopy fixture.

One big problem Sergeant Carter had noted was fixtures used at other bases didn't have a center rest to hold the correct angle for the back bow of the canopy, and as a result it might not

correctly seal when closed on the aircraft.

"If you lose the bow, when the canopy is brought down it doesn't mate up to the windscreen," Sergeant Carter said. "Even when you inflate the seal, you still get air escaping. It might be good enough to get by for a flight, but it can still leak rain down inside the cockpit."

To correct that problem, the 442nd maintainers here had modified the fixture they used and added a center rest. Other units came up with their own versions of answers to the problem.

Still, the Air Force had decreed uniformity in all of the fixtures so Sergeant Carter and his maintenance shop took a set of complex 30-year-old drawings and, in their down-time, started to design and build what was to become the Air Force prototype for A-10 canopy transparency rigging fixtures.

"We looked over the drawings, checked all of the numbers, ordered materials and we began to build the fixture," Sergeant Carter said.

As the fixture came together, it soon became apparent to the reservists that all was not right with the original drawings and specifications.

"In the process of building it we would discover things that weren't feasible or weren't going to be very effective," Sergeant Carter said. "I let them know that changes would have to be made and they just told me to press on, and then once I was done to make note of all of

the changes that we made and what their dimensions were.

"They came out, inspected it and checked all of the tolerances," Sergeant Carter said. "They made sure all of the angles were correct."

The hard work and attention to detail paid off. The Air Force accepted all modifications and decided to make the Whiteman fixture the prototype for all A-10 units.

"They are adjusting the original drawings to match what we did here at Whiteman," Sergeant Carter said. "They redid the drawings so that the rest of the A-10 units can build their fixtures like ours."

Using unit funds and working only between other assigned tasks, Sergeant Carter and his co-workers had not only figured out how to manufacture the fixture, but created a dual-purpose transportation and rigging fixture vastly improving the original design and ended up setting the standard for the Air Force.

*'I call it the Carter Conversion'
— Master Sgt. Brian Bass,
442nd Structures Flight chief*



Capt. David Kirkendall, an active-duty A-10 pilot from Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany, prepares to taxi an A-10 from the Air Force Reserve's 442nd Fighter Wing at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., Feb. 11. The 442nd has

teamed up with the 81st Fighter Squadron from Spangdahlem to provide training flights and upgrade training to active-duty pilots for the next two months. The two units deployed together in May to Afghanistan.

(Below) Capt. David Kirkendall, left, and Lt. Col. Stephen Chappel, director of operations, 303rd Fighter Squadron, receive a briefing from the 303rd FS supervisor of flying at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., Feb. 11.

Story and photos by Maj. David Kurler



The lines between active duty and the Air Force Reserve blurred a little more at the 442nd Fighter Wing in February as it partnered with the 81st Fighter Squadron from Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany, the same A-10 unit it deployed with nine months ago.

Twenty pilots from the 81st, part of the 52nd Fighter Wing, will fly with the 442nd at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., through the beginning of May.

"It's a win-win situation for both units," said Lt. Col. John Hoff, commander of the 442nd FW's 303rd Fighter Squadron. "It's a win for Ops because we keep our instructor pilots sharp, it's a win for maintenance because they bring in new Airmen for seasoning and it's win for (the 81st FS at) Spangdahlem because they get upgrade training."

"It's nice to see these guys again," said Capt. David Kirkendall, an A-10 pilot from the 81st. The two squadrons teamed up in May 2006 for an Aerospace Expeditionary Force deployment to Operation Enduring Freedom at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan.

Pilots from the 81st will rotate through in three stages for the next three months to fly with Reserve pilots and catch up on training sorties, which have been hard to come by at their base in Germany.

A number of factors limited the amount of training sorties the 81st was able to fly this winter in Germany, including bad weather, flight restrictions on the type and amount of flights allowed by the German government, and the availability of aircraft,

which needed maintenance after returning from a four-month AEF deployment.

"In Germany, we normally don't get to fly at 500 feet wherever we want to," Captain Kirkendall said. "It's great to come to Whiteman and fly low."

Low-level flying is important in A-10 training since its primary role is providing close air support to combat units on the ground.

"We have no tactical ranges in Germany where we can shoot tactically and drop practice bombs," Captain Kirkendall said. "In January we had two weeks when we couldn't fly because of ice-fog."

A-10 pilots at Whiteman fly daily training missions to Cannon Range near Fort Leonard Wood in central Missouri to shoot the plane's 30-millimeter gun and drop practice bombs.

"Spangdahlem is in a unique situation because of bad weather, airplane availability and flight rules in Germany," Colonel Hoff said. "They have a problem getting enough flying time, so that's where we step in."

"Some of them will employ more practice bombs in a month at Cannon Range than they will all year back at Spangdahlem," he said.

Colonel Hoff's plan for getting the active-duty pilots the flying time they need include three priorities. The first is getting them re-current on training sorties they need to maintain a status of "combat-mission-ready."

To maintain a CMR status, active-duty pilots need eight flights per month for experienced aviators and nine per month for those considered inexperienced, according to Captain Kirkendall.

Colonel Hoff's second priority is to provide "lead-upgrade" training, so that pilots will return to Germany fully qualified to lead two- and four-aircraft formations in combat.

This requires four to eight training flights and a final "check ride" to make sure a pilot is fully "lead qualified," he said. "The third goal is other associated training – night takeoffs and landings, as well as targeting pod upgrades."

Colonel Hoff credits the 442nd Maintenance Group for making this Total Force initiative a reality. After all, without well-maintained aircraft, flying the training sorties would not be possible.

"It's not only pilots teaching these guys," he said. "It's maintenance generating the additional airplanes. It's a team effort."

Both Air Force Reserve Command and U.S. Air Forces Europe approved the Total Force initiative. USAFE provided funding for 900 man-days in the 442nd Maintenance Group so that enough reservists were available to support the additional sorties.

"This allowed the maintenance group to bring in 10 Airmen for 90 days each," Colonel Hoff said. "Maintenance can bring in younger Airmen to get experience. Instead of waiting for an annual tour, we can bring in a young maintainer, right out of training, and season them, reinforcing what they learned in tech school."

It also benefits the 442nd Fighter Wing in other ways, according to Colonel Hoff.

"The future leaders in the A-10 community are some of these young pilots (from the 81st)," he said. "If they see now what the Reserve can do for them, they will trust us when they get into leadership positions. They're going to be the squadron commanders in 12 to 15 years."

In addition, the wing's instructor pilots gain experience in teaching techniques and procedures while flying alongside the younger, active-duty pilots, according to Colonel Hoff.

"The active duty has faith that we will train their pilots and train them right," he said. "Reserve squadrons are heavy on in-



Capt. David Kirkendall, left, an active-duty A-10 pilot from the 81st Fighter Squadron, Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany, and Air Force Reserve crew chief, Airman 1st Class, Jeremy Cline, 442nd Fighter Wing, prepare a 442nd A-10 for a training mission Feb. 11. Airman Cline is serving on 90-day orders to help support the additional aircraft needed to accommodate the increase in the number of training sorties.

structor pilots. We've got the experience and we're willing to help them out."

"It's just good training to come here and learn different tactics and see different ranges," Captain Kirkendall said. "Flying is dynamic, so it's good to see something different and get inputs from experienced instructor pilots."

The two units also share the same AEF rotation schedule and could very well be deployed together again in the future.

"This prepares us for war because we'll be flying again with these pilots in combat," Colonel Hoff said.

"One of the best benefits is getting to fly with the guys you went to war with," Captain Kirkendall said.

The current partnership with the 81st is not the only Total Force initiative underway at the 442nd Fighter Wing. Active-duty pilots from Spangdahlem and Eilson Air Force Base trained here in 2006.

In addition, under the Fighter Associate Program, the active-duty currently has three pilots assigned to the wing for three-year tours and plans call for a total of six active-duty pilots in the future, according to Colonel Hoff.

"Our wing receives requests to train active-duty pilots because of our credibility," Colonel Hoff said. "One of the greatest compliments we can get is when these pilots return to their units and tell their commanders 'those 442nd folks are just like us.'"

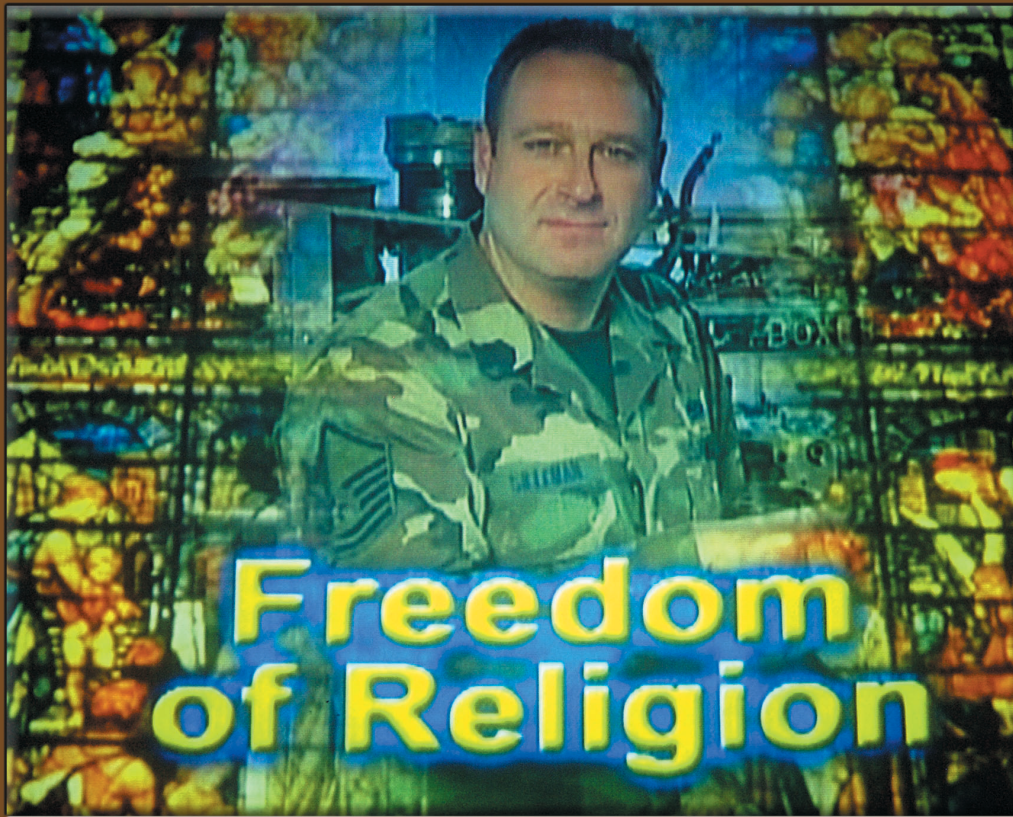


PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY MASTER SGT. BILL HUNTINGTON

Master Sgt. Todd Sieleman, 442nd Fighter Wing Safety office, put his acting talents to work when he briefly appeared in a public service announcement produced by the Veterans of Foreign Wars organization based in Kansas City, Mo. The spot, which focused on the need to "Thank a Veteran" for the freedoms enjoyed by Americans, will run on television stations nation-wide.

Wing member featured in VFW PSA

By Tech. Sgt. Leo Brown

A little can say a lot. That's the hope Tom Talbert, communications manager for the Veteran's of Foreign Wars national headquarters in Kansas City, has for three little words said by the 442nd Fighter Wing's Master Sgt. Todd Sieleman.

Sergeant Sieleman, the non-commissioned officer in charge of weapons safety, recently appeared in 30- and 60-second VFW public service announcements saying simply, "thank a veteran."

While Sergeant Sieleman's message and on-camera time last just a few seconds, Mr. Talbert said he hopes Sieleman's words will send a clear statement about the importance of having an attitude of gratitude for veterans.

"It's a public service announcement to softly promote the VFW, but primarily to thank the troops and all veterans, active, retired and deceased," said Mr. Talbert, who is also a staff sergeant with the wing's public affairs office.

Sergeant Sielemann said taking part in this effort helped remind him of the sacrifices veterans have made. "I make it a point when I see an old man with a (military) ball cap to go up and say, 'thank you.' I make it a point when I see a young kid in a military uniform to go up and say, 'thank you.' If we don't do that for the young kids, they'll never learn to appreciate what veterans have

done for us."

"He was excellent," Mr. Talbert said of Sergeant Sieleman. "He was exactly what we were looking for. We hit all four services and he represented the Air Force."

Taped at the Aviation Institute of Maintenance in Kansas City, Mr. Talbert said the spot will be seen "as people flip through their local stations.

Pretty much all commercial and cable stations around the country can use it, he said. It will also be available soon on the VFW Website (www.vfw.org).

"We are an advocacy organization for veterans," Mr. Talbert said. "If it weren't for organizations like the VFW, you wouldn't have pensions, you wouldn't have (Veterans Affairs) hospitals, lots of things like that.

"The GI Bill was a direct response to organizations like the VFW," he said. "Our commander-in-chief testifies often before Congress so they can pass bills that are friendly to veterans.

"The purpose of the spot, from a strategy standpoint of the VFW, is to increase awareness of our organization and the service we provide to veterans in a subtle yet compelling manner," Mr. Talbert said. "We're trying to get VFW's name in the public's eye, but we also want to show our public service approach to supporting veterans."

Nation-wide, the VFW and its auxiliary number 2.4 million.



PHOTO USED WITH PERMISSION OF MISSOURI STATE ARCHIVES

Former Missouri Governor Joseph P. "Walkin' Joe" Teasdale once served with the 442nd in the mid-1960s as an Airman 3rd Class in the Wing's legal office.

Heritage to Horizons

Missouri's "Walkin' Joe" once walked as a 442nd Airman

*By Tech. Sgt. Mike Morrison
442nd Fighter Wing Historian*

The Air Force has produced scores of general officers who have risen through the enlisted ranks to become commissioned officers.

Certainly, the 442nd Fighter Wing has enjoyed its own success in commissioning its enlisted Citizen Airmen into the officer corps. However, the wing has the distinction of being an Air Force Reserve unit that provided, for a time, a home to one of Missouri's future governors.

In April 1966, Airman 3rd Class Joseph P. Teasdale transferred from the 2483rd Air Reserve Sector to the 442nd Military Airlift Wing.

According to the August 1966 issue of the *Mohawk*, the 30-year-old Airman served as a "technician in the wing legal office."

What sets Teasdale apart from his fellow Airmen at the time was his civilian occupation.

It seems that Teasdale, who at the time of his enlistment, also served as the Assistant United States attorney for the Western District of Missouri in Kansas City.

While unique in its own right, this era of Teasdale's career proved to be a starting point.

During his stint with the wing he ran in the 1966 Democratic primary for Jackson County prosecutor. He successfully defeated the incumbent prosecutor, Democrat Lawrence Gepford, to become the youngest-ever candidate for prosecutor.

Although members of the wing's legal office at the time could not have known, Teasdale would win the office in the general election, held in November of 1966. He would hold that office until his return to private practice in 1972. Teasdale's political odyssey did not end in there.

In 1976 he won the Democratic Party's nomination for Missouri governor. In that same year he won – in large part due to his insistence on traversing the state of Missouri on foot earning him the nickname Walkin' Joe Teasdale – an electoral upset against then-governor, and future United States Senator, Christopher "Kit" Bond for the right to live in the governor's mansion as Missouri's chief executive.

In an era of two-term governorships Teasdale's tenure at the helm of state government was short lived.

Facing intra-party conflict, Teasdale survived a primary challenge in 1980 but lost his bid for re-election to the same man he unseated in 1976, then Governor, now Senator Bond.

After leaving office, Teasdale returned to private practice with the Teasdale and Teasdale law firm in Kansas City.

Champions!

442nd wins fourth intramural b-ball crown

Story and photo by Maj. David Kurlle

The 442nd Fighter Wing's over-30 intramural basketballers took home the Whiteman Air Force Base championship trophy for the fourth time in five years Feb. 15 in the base gym.

The 442nd defeated the 509th Security Forces Squadron 41 to 32 at the end of regulation in a game marked by tenacious defense by both teams and a physical fourth quarter as the cops' team tried to rally.

It was a victory made sweeter after last year's loss in the championship game to the 509th Logistics Readiness Squadron and by the fact that the 442nd's only defeat earlier in the 2007 season was at the hands of the very same SFS squad they faced in this year's championship game.

"This win really felt good, probably because we lost last year," said Carl Clark, the 442nd team's player-coach. "We've been in the championship game five years in a row and we like winning.

"I was nervous last night because we had lost to this team in the regular season," he said.

The first quarter was dominated by the fighter wing's defense, which allowed only two points in the first, nine-minute quarter.

"We changed our defense just for this game," said Jeff Pahl, who led the 442nd in scoring with 18 for the game including four, three-pointers. "We changed to a 3-2 zone to shut down their three-point shooters."

The strategy worked. Despite stubborn attempts to shoot from the outside, the cold-shooting SFS team was forced to go inside against the fighter wing, which dominated the defensive glass throughout the game.

John Schriever drives to the basket around a defender for a score while Keith Yersak, number 20, sets a screen during the Whiteman Air Force Base Over-30 Intramural Basketball Championship Feb. 15. The 442nd Fighter Wing team beat the squad from the 509th Security Forces Squadron 41-32 to claim the team's fourth base title in five years.

The second quarter started with the 442nd up 12-2, but the fighter wing team kept up their shooting pace, outscoring the cops 12 to 10 in the second quarter, which sent the game to halftime with the 442nd up 24-12.

The third quarter looked like it might be another defensive battle then the SFS squad finally landed a three-point shot with 7:18 left, which seemed to give them renewed confidence in their outside shooting.

The 442nd defense kept pace, but outside shooting from the cops pulled them within seven points, 28-21, with 2:12 left in the third, which was the closest

they would come to taking the lead.

Security Forces played a more physical game in the fourth quarter and tried for a comeback, but the fighter wing's combination of defense and shooting widened the lead until two minutes left when they started working the clock.

"The other team went to a man-to-man (defense), which we haven't seen all year, so we had to put up a quick offense to get screens for each other," said Mark Ernewein, who could be heard exhorting his teammates to set up screens during timeouts.

He said the other key to the game was covering the cops' two, three-point shooters on defense.





Airmen from the 438th Air Expeditionary Group recover one of the newly assigned A-10 Thunderbolt II aircraft Jan. 17 at Al Asad Air Base, Iraq. The unit's mission is to provide close-air support for coalition forces in the Al-Anbar province.

U.S. AIR FORCE PHOTO BY CHIEF MASTER SGT. BRUCE MAXSON

Mission: Close air support in Al-Anbar Province

A-10s report for desert duty in Iraq

*By 1st Lt. Landon Derentz
332nd Air Expeditionary Wing Public Affairs*

ALASAD AIR BASE, Iraq – A-10 Thunderbolt IIs assigned to the 438th Air Expeditionary Group landed one by one at their new home here Jan. 17.

The 438th is in the Al Anbar province to provide close-air support to coalition forces in the region.

“We feel extremely honored to support the Combined Forces Air Component commander’s mission in Iraq and to be joining the proud heritage of the 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing – the Tuskegee Airmen,” Col. Patrick Malackowski, 438th AEG commander, told a formation of more than 200 Airmen during the unit’s activation and assumption of command ceremony Jan. 15.

The 438th AEG falls under the 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing at Balad Air Base, Iraq. Brig. Gen. Robin Rand, 332nd AEW commander, presided over the ceremony and welcomed the 438th AEG into the wing.

“Just like the P-47 Thunderbolts that provided close-air support for Marines storming the beaches of Iwo Jima 60 years ago,” General Rand said. “The modern-day warriors of this group will soon be providing close-air support in A-10 Thunderbolts for Marines on the streets of Ramadi and Fallujah.

“Together, we will influence the course of history and help

Iraq transition to democracy,” he said.

The A-10s join the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward), soon to be replaced by the 2nd MAW (Forward), as the primary units operating from the base. Marine F-18 Hornets, C-130 Hercules, EA-6B Prowlers, AV-8 Harriers and several types of rotary wing aircraft are currently in use here.

With the addition of A-10s, the 332nd AEW now has five primary aircraft in its inventory, including F-16 Fighting Falcons, C-130 Hercules, MQ-1 Predator unmanned aerial vehicles and HH-60 Pave Hawk combat-search-and-rescue helicopters. The addition of the A-10s greatly increases the wing’s role in providing precision weapons, as well as intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance support.

“In my opinion there are no pilots who perform close air support better than A-10 pilots,” General Rand said. “The 438th Air Expeditionary Group’s mission against anti-Iraqi forces will be vital in helping to secure victory in Iraq.”

The A-10s are deployed from the 74th Fighter Squadron, Pope Air Force Base, N.C.

Their distinctive shark’s-teeth nose art identifies them as direct descendants of the famed World War II P-40 fighters known as the “Flying Tigers.” The original shark’s teeth and eyes were designed to scare enemies during battles in Burma and China.

Lexie Howe, daughter of Master Sgt. Floyd Howe, 442nd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, receives a round of applause after being named as recipient of the 442nd Reserve Officers Association Annual Scholarship at the Wing's February Commanders Call. Competition for the \$500 one-time scholarship, supported in part by the Wing's Reserve Enlisted Association, was open to enlisted Wing members and their families. Photo by Master Sgt. Bill Huntington

**DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
442ND FIGHTER WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS
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TO THE FAMILY OF:



As I close this chapter of my journey, please know that I was privileged and honored to serve with each of you. Your friendship, mentorship, leadership, professionalism and devotion to duty are, beyond any doubt, what make America great. You made a difference in my life, and you will always have my deepest respect and appreciation."
**- Chief Master Sgt. Jackson A. Winsett,
AFRC Command Chief Master Sergeant**