

MOHAWK

442nd Fighter Wing



**Wing completes
ORI, prepares
for follow up**



Airman & Family Readiness offers support, gratitude during holidays

*By Master Sgt. Vickie Chambers
Airman & Family Readiness*

It is hard to believe the holidays are among us again.

Finding time to spend with family and friends, and of course eat tons of great food is a great benefit for the holidays!

It is also time to look toward the future to try and figure out what it holds for us all.

For some it may hold a future of

uncertainty. They may have families with health problems and financial concerns due job loss. For many others the season may be bright and cheery.

Please remember that no matter what may be going on in your life, you always have the support of the 442nd Fighter Wing and your Airman and Family Readiness office.

We do not have a magic wand we wave for answers and solutions, but we have many contacts and resources

available for you.

Let this be a great holiday season and remember we are here for you and your families.

Also, we want to thank you and your families for the many sacrifices made this past year for our unit and our nation.

The sacrifices that go unnoticed and those that are highly praised, all are important and help the 442nd be the best family in the Air Force. Happy Holidays and stay safe!

AFRC commander sends holiday wishes

*By Lt. Gen. Charles E. Stenner Jr.
Commander, Air Force Reserve Command*

ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga. – As we enter the holiday season and prepare for the new year, I want to thank you, your families and your employers for the many sacrifices made this year for our great nation.

The holidays provide all of us an opportunity to thank our friends and families for their support throughout the year.

To the men and women who are able to celebrate the holidays with friends and family at home, I ask that you remember the hundreds of brave Citizen Airmen who are observing the season under much different circumstances.

More than 1,200 of our Air Force Reserve warriors are serving overseas with incredible distinction in global

operations from the deserts of Iraq and Africa to the mountains of Afghanistan and South America. I ask the entire Air Force Reserve family to keep these folks in your thoughts and prayers as we eagerly await their safe return.

This past year much has been asked of you, and you have met every challenge without reservation.

In the coming years, we will face many more challenges as Air Force Reserve Command becomes a fully operational command.

We will be more directly involved in meeting the needs of combatant commanders overseas.

I have every confidence that you are up to every task and will exceed all expectations.

Dee and I wish you and your families the very best during this festive time and for 2010!



Lt. Gen. Charles E. Stenner Jr.

MOHAWK

442nd Fighter Wing

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ORI TOP PERFORMERS

Five teams and 19 individuals recognized as outstanding by the ACC IG

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T 442nd Fighter Wing Tip of the Spear

MASTER SGT. RUSTY HARVEY, 442ND MAINTENANCE SQUADRON

Master Sgt. Rusty Harvey is a production controller in the 442nd Maintenance Squadron's Engine Management Section. His work ethic, dedication and willingness to help out wherever he is needed make him this month's Tip of the Spear.

When faced with a manning shortage in the maintenance operations center during the operational readiness inspection, Sergeant Harvey stepped up to fill the shortage and served as the MOC's night shift senior controller. He quickly developed a rapport with all other controllers working in the main unit control center and MOC, and was an immediate contributor to a successful team effort.

Faced with a family emergency the evening prior to the start of the exercise Sergeant Harvey had every reason to sit this one out. However, after heading home to be with his family, he turned around and headed back to Whiteman – showing a dedication to duty. His decision making, attention to detail and calm demeanor throughout the exercise were lauded by virtually all of the night shift supervisors. Sergeant Harvey's selflessness and dedication contribute greatly to his being truly among the best in the 442nd Fighter Wing.

2009 Charge-of-quarters



SENIOR MASTER SGT. TODD SIELEMAN 442ND AIRCRAFT MAINTENANCE 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: Tech. Sgt. Daniel Romine, 442nd Civil Engineer Squadron, stays vigilant Oct. 24 during a convoy exercise, which was part of the October operational readiness inspection. Sergeant Romine and most of the rest of the CE Squadron operated from "Camp Rock" for the two-day field training portion of the inspection. (Photo by Senior Airman Kenny Holston)

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Shrine, cemetery cleanup strengthens US, Iraqi Airmen relations

Story and photo by Staff Sgt. Daniel Martinez

KIRKUK REGIONAL AIR BASE, Iraq – American and Iraqi Airmen worked together to clean up the Sultan Saqi shrine and cemetery here Sept. 18 as the month of Ramadan neared an end.

Sixteen volunteer Airmen from the 506th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron filled garbage bags with trash and weeds that littered the cemetery grounds while Iraqi Airmen washed the shrine with scrub brushes and a fire hose.

Chaplain, Lt. Col., Francis Lowe, 506th Air Expeditionary Group, who deployed here from the 81st Training Wing, Keesler Air Force Base, Miss., coordinated the joint venture to beautify the Islamic holy site.

“There’s an old saying: It’s one thing to be nice to somebody, but if you’re nice to their children or their relatives, you honor them even more,” Chaplain Lowe said. “It means a lot to the Iraqis that we were out there in the hot sun cleaning up and doing this for their dead. It doesn’t just honor their relatives; it honors their religion and their culture.”

Chaplain Lowe said this sort of gesture has a ripple effect that aids in nation building.

“It does a lot to build relations and tear down the illusion that we’re bad guys,” he said. “This is something they can take back to people downtown, to their relatives and say ‘Look what the Americans

did, they cleaned our sacred shrine.”

The chaplain said the cleanup was in preparation for Eid al-Fitr, a three-day Islamic holiday celebrating the end of Ramadan. During Eid al-Fitr, Muslims strengthen bonds with family and friends and visit gravesites. The history of the shrine and cemetery here is relatively unknown, but an American of Iraqi descent provided some insight to the chaplain about the significance of the holy site.

“I was told by an interpreter that the mosque was built over the graves of the Sultan Saqi and 90 of his followers who were martyred more than 1,000 years ago, which makes the site sacred to the Iraqis,” Chaplain Lowe said. “Since that time, many others have been buried in the cemetery that expanded around the shrine, some as recently as the 1980s.”

After the Iraqis washed the shrine, the chaplain was invited to step inside and view the green, tiled floors, colorful holy Muslim sigils written in Arabic on the walls and the inside of the dome.

Respectful of the significance the shrine is to the Iraqis, the volunteer Airmen moved cautiously between the mounds, tombstones and the brick-encased and concreted graves. Many carried bags filled to capacity while others carried items that couldn’t fit in the bags. Some Airmen said it was a chance to positively reach out to the Iraqis.

“This was definitely an amazing experience for me.



Tech. Sgt. Daniel Landi, deployed 442nd security forces Airman, assists with cemetery cleanup in Iraq. The deployed Airmen provide base security at Kirkuk Air Base.

SEE AEF, PAGE 11



Mission first, safety always

Story and photo by Staff Sgt. Kent Kagarise

After two days of hiding from thunderstorms and mud, the third day of the 442nd Fighter Wing's operational readiness inspection brought many Airmen out from under cover into a safer atmosphere.

Having been given the opportunity to flee the tight confines of the wing's unit control center, Lt. Col. Patrick Murphy, 442nd FW chief of safety, grabbed his helmet and backpack, and headed for the door to do the "Safety Dance."

On his way back to the personnel center at the end of a rainy day two of the ORI, Colonel Murphy noticed the grass path was very saturated.

"This'll be an absolute muddy gauntlet by tomorrow," Colonel Murphy said. "We'll need to do something about it before the morning shift change – before someone slips and gets hurt."

The following morning, Airmen were treated to a line of cones on the road allowing them to walk on a much safer asphalt surface as opposed to the sloppy trough adjacent to them.

Colonel Murphy's head was always on a swivel. As he approached the flight line, he noticed a metal wire running between 4-foot high poles and lifted it for those walking with him.

"This thing is really dangerous," Colonel Murphy said. "I'd like to see them remove this because a few people have walked into it in the darkness of night," he said. "We've been lucky nobody's been seriously injured."

"Safety First," is a slogan most Airmen are familiar with, but the safety office holds a different philosophy when it comes to the safety of the 442nd Fighter Wing.

"Mission first, safety always," Colonel Murphy said. "What that means to me is the mission is our priority, but priorities change – safety doesn't."

"Missions come and go; safety stays the same," he said.

Safety is an ongoing process for Colonel Murphy and his staff of nine Airmen. They are constantly on the lookout for deficiencies. But planning, he said, is the key to preventing injuries. As the ORI approached, the 442nd FW's safety office was hard at work.

"We've already done our job," Colonel Murphy said.

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ORI top p

INDIVIDUALS:

Maj. Preston J. McConnell, 303rd Fighter Squadron

Maj. Abel Ramos, 303rd Fighter Squadron

Maj. Todd D. Riddle, 303rd Fighter Squadron

Capt. Keith C. Yersak, 442nd Fighter Wing

Master Sgt. Tyler R. Bane, 442nd Maintenance Squadron

Master Sgt. Robert S. Safley, 442nd Operations Support Flight

Tech. Sgt. Larry M. Anderson, 442nd Maintenance Squadron

Tech. Sgt. Anthony R. Bonham, 442nd Maintenance Squadron

Tech. Sgt. Piotr Cymer, 442nd Maintenance Squadron

Tech. Sgt. Michael D. Harris, 442nd Maintenance Squadron

Tech. Sgt. Christopher J. Hinote, 442nd Maintenance Operations Flight

Tech. Sgt. Robert A. Kjos, 442nd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron

Senior Airman Kyle S. Brown, 442nd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron

Senior Airman Kiley R. Devericks, 442nd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron

Senior Airman Aaron R. From, 442nd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron

Senior Airman Rindi C. Randolph, 442nd Maintenance Squadron

Senior Airman Russell R. Roberts, 442nd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron

Senior Airman Jacob D. Santos, 442nd Maintenance Squadron

Airman 1st Class Matthew D. Bounds, 442nd Maintenance Operation Flight



PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. KENT KAGARISE

Capt. Jason Weiser, Tech. Sgt. Christopher Hinote, Master Sgt. John Kuiper and Master Sgt. Kenneth Koyles conduct accountability in the maintenance unit control center during the ORI.



Tech. Sgt. Shaun McCrea, Staff Sgt. Dean [Name] an AGM-65 Maverick missile for upload during the ORI in October.

performers

TEAMS:

442nd Operations Support Flight Aircrew Flight Equipment Team
442nd Fighter Wing Installation Control Center Command Post Console Team
442nd Mission Support Flight Personnel Support for Contingency Operations
442nd Fighter Wing Religious Support Team
442nd Maintenance Group Weapons Load Crew #15



PHOTO BY SENIOR AIRMAN KENNY HOLSTON

Gross and Tech. Sgt. Wesley Peel prepare the operational readiness inspection



PHOTO BY SENIOR AIRMAN KENNY HOLSTON

Three members of the 442nd move quickly across the flight line Oct. 26 to participate in the ORI.



PHOTO BY DEBBIE ARAGON

Chief Master Sgt. Steven J. Gambaiana receives a retirement pin from his father, a World War II

veteran, during the 710th Medical Squadron mass retirement ceremony Oct. 3.

Offutt's 710th Medical Squadron

442nd Fighter Wing's geographically separated unit

By Staff Sgt. Kent Kagarise

The 710th Medical Squadron conducted its final unit training assembly Nov. 8 in preparation for its official deactivation Dec. 1. The 710th is a geographically separated unit of the 442nd Fighter Wing at Offutt Air Force Base.

Col. Joan Gonzalez, the 710th MDS commander, said she is very proud of her unit and is filled with mixed emotions.

"It's bittersweet," Colonel Gonzalez said.

"The 710th was No. 1 in the Air Force Reserve at being ready to deploy, and we are so good at what we do; it is sad to see us be inactivated," she said. "But, there will now be a number of quality individuals to be infused into other units, and that can only help to strengthen our overall reserve force."

The 710th MDS has supported Air Force missions in many aspects throughout its existence, such as providing aid for Hurricane Katrina victims and individual deployments for Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. Included also are individual deployments to Guam, Surinam, Tunisia and Korea. The squadron also provided support for the 55th Security Forces Squadron at Offutt throughout the Global War on Terrorism.

At full capacity the 710th Medical Squadron was comprised of 160 Airmen who needed new units upon discovering their unit's deactivation. They were faced with the challenge of finding new units and securing their future military careers.

"We had recruiters from just about every branch of the military visit us. The 442nd Military Personnel Flight came up to give us information and leadership and made a lot of personal calls to provide our people



PHOTO BY DEBBIE ARAGON

The 710th Medical Squadron hosted a mass retirement ceremony. In attendance: Col. Joan Gonzalez, Capt. Kami L. Willett, Master Sgt. Jeffrey J. Sparrock, Lt. Col. Shelly R. Kinney, Chief Master Sgt. Steven J. Gambaiana, Lt. Col.

Howard E. Phillippi, Tech. Sgt. John A. Yonkers, Master Sgt. Kelly Kay, Master Sgt. Audrey L. Bennett, Master Sgt. Anna L. Sewell, Master Sgt. Jean F. Tait and Master Sgt. Debra A Bernhardt.

710th Medical Squadron gives its final salute

prepares for deactivation Dec. 1

with every possible opportunity that may be out there,” Colonel Gonzalez said.

“At this point almost everybody has orders in their hands,” she said.

Lt. Col. Shelly Kinney, 710th MDS flight commander has served her entire 21-year Air Force career at Offutt Air Force Base.

“Even though people knew they had to find new units, they hung around as long as they could,” Colonel Kinney said. “Many of those who found new homes still stuck around all the way to the very end.”

Many retirees and past members of the 710th MDS returned for the deactivation ceremony where the squadron flag was rolled up one last time.

Master Sgt. Kelly Kay, 710th MDS first sergeant, described it as an emotional event.

“I’ve been in the Air Force 25 years and Offutt has been my only home,” Sergeant Kay said. “I’ve

seen marriages, divorces, babies and grandchildren — we’re like a family.”

And she said she won’t forget that love and loyalty the 710th has for each other.

“I know that when we turn the lights off inside the 710th our relationships will continue to be lit,” Sergeant Kay said.

With a final note, Colonel Gonzalez said, “On behalf of the 710th Medical Squadron I’d like to express our gratitude to the Air Force Reserve community for allowing us to be a critical part of their mission and we look forward now as individuals to the opportunity of continuing that same quality of support.”

Prior to the final unit training assembly, 10 reservists participated in a mass retirement Oct. 3 at Offutt Air Force Base’s Patriot Club. Between them, the retirees spent a combined total of 250 years in the U.S. Air Force.

Wing cuts ribbon on new 303rd Fighter Squadron building

New construction marks end of 2-year wait

By Maj. David Kurle

Two years of anticipation came to an end Nov. 7 when the commanders of the 442nd Fighter Wing and the 303rd Fighter Squadron cut the ribbon on the A-10 unit's new operations building.

The \$8.4 million facility was recently completed and A-10 pilots and operations support staffs are currently moving into the building, which boasts enhanced security, larger workspaces and spectacular views of the Whiteman Air Force Base flight line.

The larger facility was the result of the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure Commission's decision to add nine additional A-10s and 250 more people to the 442nd FW.

The 303rd FS had been operating out of office space in the 509th Bomb Wing's T-38 hangar; now the A-10 pilots in the 303rd have a place of their own.

The facility was constructed with help from the Regular Air Force's 509th Bomb Wing, the host unit at Whiteman, as well as engineering, contracting and construction support provided by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineer's Kansas City District, commanded by Army Col. Roger Wilson.



PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. KENT KAGARISE

Chief Master Sgt. Allan Sturges, 442nd Fighter Wing command chief; Col. James Mackey, 442nd FW vice commander; Maj. Gen. Frank Padilla, commander of 10th Air Force; Mr. Jess Kellock, president of the Whiteman Base Community Council; Col. Mark Clemons, 442nd FW commander; Lt. Col. Stephen Chappel, 303rd FS director of operations; Lt. Col. Brian Borgen, 303rd FS commander; Brig. Gen. Robert Wheeler, 509th Bomb Wing commander; Mr. James Rudy, engineer for the Army Corps of Engineers; and Lt. Col. Mike Fitzgerald, deputy commander of the Army Corps' Kansas-City District.

Deployed 442nd Airmen clean up cemetery in Iraq

Continued from Page 4

I was grateful to be part of the cemetery cleanup and I enjoyed establishing a good rapport with the Iraqis,” said Tech. Sgt. Charles Simpson, 506th ESFS, deployed here from 116th SFS, Robins Air Force Base, Ga. “It just takes the small things that we do to change the mindsets of many Iraqis.”

Many Airmen shared Sergeant Simpson's enthusiasm and purpose for volunteering to clean up the sacred site.

“I felt it was important, for one to help build bridges between the Iraqi people and us regarding religious and cultural barriers,” said Tech. Sgt. Daniel Landi, 506th ESFS, deployed here from the 442nd SFS, Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo. “Also I felt this was a good opportunity to help the nation builders.”

Sergeant Landi said coming together to volunteer for this cause shows compassion and closes gaps between U.S. Airmen and Iraqis.

“I felt a lot of pride from this particular experience because primarily it shows the compassionate side of U.S. forces...Also it makes you feel good to do something nice for somebody,” he said.



PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. DANIEL MARTINEZ

Tech. Sgt. John Wulff, 506th Expeditionary SFS picks up garbage near a gravesite while cleaning up the Sultan Saqi cemetery, Sept. 18.

Safety: The curse that protects the 442nd

Continued from Page 5

We've already found the things that needed to be fixed, and now they should be working.”

Colonel Murphy said he is very proud of the wing's safety office and speaks highly of the personnel who have years of experience in the safety field.

“It's almost as if these guys have extra brain cells due to their expertise, and that makes the job easy,” he said.

Rarely however, do Airman in the safety office take credit for any accolades their team receives.

“What makes safety successful in the wing is the people and their culture of safety,” said Steve Smith, 442nd chief of weapons safety. “We offer them guidance and continuity to assist them in maintaining an attitude of safety.”

Staff Sgt. James VanGilder, 442nd Fighter Wing ground safety manager said he finds it comforting to be a

part of an office whose job is to look out for the welfare of its fellow Airmen.

“There's a certain sense of responsibility to know that their safety is on your shoulders,” Sergeant VanGilder said.

And that's not something Colonel Murphy takes lightly.

“I've been working in safety for five years and it's kind of a curse,” Colonel Murphy said.

“We're all trained on it but when you're designated to be the guy responsible for people's safety, you start noticing everything and realize it's not safe to get out of bed in the morning.”

The 442nd Fighter Wing can be thankful that its safety personnel all respond to their clock radios in the morning and put on their non-slip, rubber-soled slippers and make their way to work – buckled up of course.

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TO THE FAMILY OF:

Lightning strikes behind the 442nd Fighter Wing's A-10 Thunderbolt IIs during an early morning thunderstorm Oct. 20. (Photo by Senior Airman Kenny Holston)



All mankind is divided into three classes: those that are immovable, those that are movable, and those that move.

-- Benjamin Franklin