

Wing picnic

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Spouses' Tanker Flight

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Thunderbird

***Mohawk* MOHAWK**

442nd Fighter Wing



**Airmen deploy to Hill
AFB for training**

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Your career journey is just as important as the destination

By Lt. Col. David Stanfield

509th Force Support Squadron commander

I went to Wal-Mart the other day and tried to strike up a conversation with the associate in the checkout aisle scanning the items I intended to purchase. “How are you doing?” I asked hoping to break the awkward silence that originally greeted me. “Have you been busy today?” She smiled and responded wearily, “Yes, it’s been crazy today – but I like it when it’s busy ... it makes the time go by fast.”

We all probably feel that way at times, but her reply got me thinking about life in the Air Force. Virtually every retiree will remark at their retirement ceremony as to how fast the time flew by. What’s sad, however, is to reach the end and realize we didn’t enjoy the journey. This is especially true for those in leadership roles. Leaders are taught to have goals and standards. Push hard. Get the job done. But leadership is also about balance: Job and family, work and relaxation, encouragement and discipline ... not just for yourself but for your troops.

I’ve been fortunate to work with and for some tremendous leaders during my career, and a commonality they all shared is an emphasis on both the end result and the process it took to get there. It is quite possible to achieve mission accomplishment only to find both you and your troops have nothing left in the tank. Simply put, if we as leaders don’t take time to enjoy the journey, and ensure our subordinates are able to do the same, we risk burning out in the end. To prevent this, let me offer a few ideas that I have used as a leadership “gut check” over the years. Contemplation of these principles might just help both you and your troops enjoy the ride toward success.

“Be careful what you hitch your horse to.”

Leaders must pick their battles and ensure the ground on which they take a stand is solid. There is no replacement for good sense. This goes for the decisions you make as well as the people with whom you choose to associate. In the leadership arena, you have to be careful who you select as your trusted advisor, as well as who you endorse as being a “great troop.” Your credibility takes a hit when you stand up and proclaim that Airman Snuffy is a great worker, only to find out a few months later that Airman Snuffy is always late to work and lets others do his work for him – not exactly the person you should be championing as a “great troop.” Do your research and be sure you know what you’re talking about in order to preserve your integrity. And make sure you know what you’re talking about before you give an answer.

“Never let your ego get so close to your position that when your position goes, your ego goes with it.”

This is my favorite quote from Army Gen. Colin Powell (ret.), former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and one I learned first-hand as a second lieutenant when I would take offense if my argument wasn’t adopted by my commander. In fact,



that same commander told me to find and print this quote, frame it, and hang it in the conference room for all to see. The truth is that everyone in the chain of command answers to a higher authority. The boss has earned the right to make the final decision and our job as followers is to arm our leaders with accurate facts and solid recommendations. I’m not saying to be passionless in your arguments but too much emotion is counterproductive and should never be a substitute for fundamental logic and sound decision-making. Put your passion into the pursuit of researching questions, identifying answers and presenting all necessary data so the boss makes the best decision possible. In the end, those above us typically have more experience, know way more about “the big picture” and are well qualified to make the right call. So don’t take it personally if you lose – salute smartly and live to fight another day.

“If everything is important, nothing is.”

This quote cuts to the chase. The Air Force has a demanding OPSTEMPO and it’s easy to fall into the trap of thinking everything must be done “now” or “today.” You can stay ahead of the power curve through effective delegation to trusted subordinates, but the most important thing is to always figure out what is most important and work that first. This is especially important in planning a weekly schedule that allows time for family, exercise, worship, and relaxation, in addition to the daily priorities required of your job. There’s only so much time in a day and the minutes are ticking away, so figure out what must be done versus what can be done, and don’t forget to work your boss’s priorities with the same sincerity you want your subordinates to work yours. And by the way, there is a difference between “urgent” and “important.” Spend more time on the important matters in your personal and professional life and stop reacting to what others may think is urgent. If there is truly an urgent matter, deal with it quickly but don’t be derailed from getting back to what is truly important.

“Life is 10 percent what happens to us and 90 percent how we respond.”

Life doesn’t always turn out the way we think it will, but what’s most important is how we respond.

In the end, leaders are responsible for mission accomplishment as well as how enjoyable the journey is along the way. I hope these concepts serve as “gut checks” to help leaders at all levels establish positive relationships and effective time management in order to free up more quality time with co-workers and family.

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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. Kathy Morrison, non-destructive inspection tester, and Staff Sgt. Don Johnston, A-10 crew chief, both of the 442nd Maintenance Group, prepare an A-10 for flight during a training deployment at Hill Air Force Base, Utah. (Photo by Senior Airman Danielle Wolf)



442nd Fighter Wing Tip of the Spear

SENIOR AIRMAN SHAWN HUDDLESTON 442ND MAINTENANCE OPERATIONS FLIGHT

Senior Airman Shawn Huddleston, a controller working in the 442nd Maintenance Operations Center, is this month's Tip of the Spear.

Airman Huddleston has been working in the MOC on a daily basis throughout the summer. His willingness to do whatever he is asked to do, to include last minute schedule changes, fill in for other work centers, and help out with all of the maintenance squadrons' summer moves has provided much-needed coverage and allowed other controllers to take some much-deserved leave.

Airman Huddleston's can-do attitude and the respect he shows to others are models to be emulated. In addition to his work while on duty, he shares his off-duty time volunteering – serving meals and providing care for the elderly, using his power-lifting knowledge to serve as a personal trainer, working (co-chairing) Coats for Kids and serving as a reserve police officer.

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442nd Fighter Wing picnic 2010

*Volunteers
prepare, serve
food for 24
hours*



Photo by Senior Airman
Danielle Wolf

Family
Tech. Sgt. Mike Harris, 442nd
Munitions Flight, goes through the
food line during the wing family day
and picnic Sept. 11.

By Staff Sgt. Kent Kagarise

Volunteers from Beaux Hawg BBQ worked for almost 24 hours preparing and serving food to nearly 1,300 members and their families at the 442nd Fighter Wing picnic and family day Sept. 11.

Mr. Brian Landry, of Beaux Hawg BBQ, has been cooking for 15 years and proudly volunteered his talents to show his support of Whiteman Citizen Airmen and their families.

“We cooked 800 pounds of pork brisket, 70 slabs of baby back ribs and 20 gallons of jambalaya,” Mr. Landry said.

Mr. Kelly Bauer passed out Mardi Gras beads to attendees as they passed through the food serving line. For him, serving Airmen and their families was about more than just feeding them.

“Seeing that it’s 9/11 and these folks defend our freedom and rights, brings a special meaning to being here today — it’s awesome,” Mr. Bauer said.

Mr. Cory Booz of the barbecue team known as Grillas served as a cook in the Navy for 10 years before serving as a Navy recruiter. Mr. Booz said he remembers meeting a young man in a grocery store years after recruiting him.

“This kid told me I saved his life because he claimed to have been on a road to nowhere,” Mr. Booz said. “It’s nice to know I made a difference in someone’s life. I’d like to think maybe I’m doing that again today.”

Mr. Dave Green, retired Navy Petty Officer 1st Class, who works for Fishnet Securities, represented Fishnet BBQ and has been volunteering in this capacity for four years.

“We like donating our time for folks who need a little love,” Mr. Green said. “We compete with our grills so it’s good to be able to provide people with a quality product.”

Command Chief Master Sergeant Allan Sturges, 442nd FW has witnessed many wing picnics over his 29 years of Air Force service.

“It’s nice that we can get the families out here to thank them for all they do,” Chief Sturges said. “With all the deployments and operational readiness exercises and inspections, we’ve got to give back to our Airmen for all the sacrifices they make and the support they give to our mission,” he said.

The wing and its families were able to savor first-rate food due to the sacrifices of some very special people who will not soon be forgotten as a new fiscal year begins and a phase I operational readiness inspection approaches.



Jambalaya

Photo by Staff Sgt. Tom Talbert

Brian Landry, of Beaux Hawg BBQ, stirs a pot of jambalaya at the wing family day and picnic Sept. 11.

RESERVISTS

head to

HILL AFB

for

TRAINING

DEPLOYMENT

HILL AIR FORCE BASE, Utah – About 70 reservists from the 442nd Fighter Wing went to Hill Air Force Base, Utah, Aug. 24 to Sept. 2 to support A-10 Thunderbolt II live-weapons training.

By Senior Airman Danielle Wolf

This was the first time the wing's pilots had the opportunity to drop live GBU-38 GPS-guided bombs.

"From an operational standpoint, this is one of the few chances a year our pilots get to do live-munition training," said Senior Master Sgt. Aaron McRoberts, acting aircraft maintenance squadron production supervisor for the training deployment. "From the maintenance standpoint, it's an opportunity to load live munitions and learn the safety aspects of working around them."

Sergeant McRoberts said the trip acted as a refresher for certain aspects of aircraft maintenance – something he doesn't always get the chance to do as a flight chief at Whiteman AFB, Mo.

For some 303rd Fighter Squadron pilots, this was also a rare chance to fire live AGM-65 Maverick missiles.

At home-station ranges, pilots fire practice munitions, which allows them to train on a daily basis. But at the Utah Test and Training Range they have ample space and ability to drop live weapons.

"This is the real thing," said Tech. Sgt. Travis Trudeau, 442nd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron ammunition technician. "We can practice all we want, but we can't get certified to load live weapons without the experience of actually doing it."

Sergeant Trudeau said it is challenging to work with limited resources – the equipment and supplies, which they brought only for the TDY – and forces reservists to work in conditions similar to that of a combat deployment.

"The environment here can be more challenging, but we need to go to other areas because it reduces complacency for the pilots and maintainers," said Lt. Col. Preston McConnell, the training deployment's troop commander.

Flying over a new range is one way to eliminate that complacency.

"Instead of having a range with hundreds of acres, we now have a range with hundreds of thousands of acres to practice on," Colonel McConnell said. "(The UTTR) gives us the ability to drop live weapons at targets, like armored personnel carriers and trucks."

Maj. Lee Saugstad said the geography of Utah is helpful for weapons training because in many ways, it mirrors the geography of the Middle East.

"Utah's geography is much more like Afghanistan's geography than that of Missouri," he said. "The mountains are large, but with vast areas of flat land. The elevation is also similar to Afghanistan's (elevation)."

The main body of people was able to experience some of those similarities when they first arrived in Utah on a C-5 Galaxy Aug. 28.

"It was very 'Bagram-esque,'" Major Saugstad said. "We landed in the middle of a dust storm, and the wind was howling."

Between weather and maintenance, the team had it's fair share of challenges.

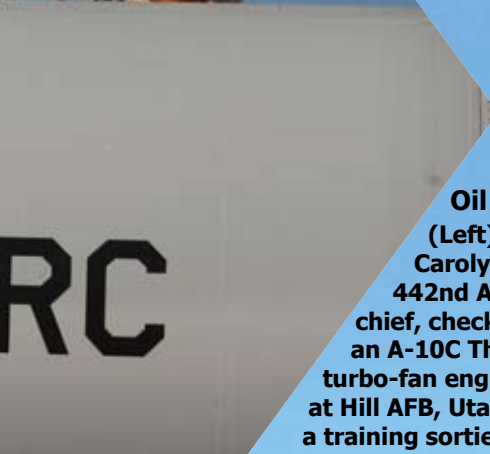
"Maintenance handled everything with class," Colonel McConnell said. "They did their jobs even though nothing went smoothly when we first got here – and because they did their jobs, we never lost a sortie. They also worked very long hours so the pilots could get valuable training."

"This whole mission was a team effort that epitomizes the strength of the 442nd Fighter Wing," he said.





Inspection | Photo by Lt. Col. David Kurle
(Right) Staff Sgt. Jasen McClendon performs a post-flight inspection.



Oil | Photo by Lt. Col. David Kurle
(Left) Tech. Sgt. Carolyn Schafer, 442nd AMXS crew chief, checks the oil in an A-10C Thunderbolt II turbo-fan engine Aug. 31 at Hill AFB, Utah, following a training sortie.



Prep | Photo by Senior Airman Danielle Wolf
(Left) Maintenance crews prepare an A-10 Thunderbolt II for flight during the Utah training deployment Sept. 1.



Pre-flight | Photo by Senior Airman Danielle Wolf
(Left) Airman 1st Class Courtney Nash (then Airman) drives pilots to the flight line where they prepare for takeoff.



MOHAWK

DFT provides realistic training

By Lt. Col. David Kurle



PHOTO BY AIRMAN DANIELLE WILF



Photo by Lt. Col. David Kurle | **Post-flight Maj. Todd Riddle returns from a flight in an A-10 Thunderbolt II Sept. 2 after training at the UTTR in Utah.**

Pilots, maintainers use live weapons for training during deployment to Hill AFB, Utah

HILL AIR FORCE BASE, Utah – The missions of the 442nd Fighter Wing’s disparate organizations lead to one ultimate goal – using deadly force from the air against America’s enemies using real bombs, missiles and bullets.

That’s why training opportunities, like the wing’s recent deployment here, are valuable, according pilots and maintainers.

“We wanted to do something we couldn’t do at home station,” said Lt. Col. Preston McConnell, the deployment’s ranking officer and 303rd Fighter Squadron A-10 pilot. “I really wanted to build our pilots’ confidence in building coordinates and weapons delivery using (joint direct-attack munitions.)”

The deployment for training – or DFT – marked the first time the wing’s pilots dropped live JDAMs – specifically, GBU-38 GPS-guided bombs. The capability to drop JDAM weapons was made possible by the wing’s recent upgrade to the C-model A-10 Thunderbolt II.

“Those bombs are amazing,” said Maj. Todd Riddle, 303rd FS A-10 pilot. “I’m hitting targets from six miles away out there.”

Pilots weren’t the only beneficiaries during the DFT. Bomb-builders from the 442nd Maintenance Squadron constructed and delivered live weapons to the flight line, which they don’t have the opportunity to work with every day at their home base – Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo.

“These are the first live JDAMs this group has built,” said Senior Master Sgt. David Hamilton, the ranking munitions specialist for the DFT. “It was good training since we don’t drop live at home. It was nice to get our Airmen to work on the real thing.”

The “Ammo” Airmen built and delivered 14 GBU-38s and 27 AGM-65 Maverick missiles for A-10 pilots to use on the bombing range.

The main attraction at Hill AFB is the nearby Utah Test and Training Range – or UTTR – a large piece of real estate west of the Great Salt Lake, which boasts 2,624 square miles of land and allows for the employment of live munitions.

“You go from hundreds of acres to hundreds-of-thousands of acres,” Colonel McConnell said, comparing the UTTR to the much smaller Cannon Range the wing’s pilots typically fly to from Whiteman AFB. “It’s a very unique range because of what you can drop here and what you can drop on.”

“We get to drop live munitions on targets, which are actually real targets,” he said, explaining that the range provides actual vehicles, armored-personnel carriers and other true-to-life surplus items for pilots to find and attack – not just markings on the ground.

The other advantage of the UTTR is the type of weapons the space allows, according to Colonel McConnell. One of those weapons is the AGM-65 Maverick missile, which is designed to hit moving targets, but requires a lot of air and ground space to fire safely.

“For quite a few of our pilots, this is the first opportunity they’ve had to shoot Mavericks at combat-representative targets,” he said.

Training with weapons the wing is likely to see in combat can also be good for maintainers who build and load the weapons.

“Our primary mission here was the JDAMs and the AGM-65,” Sergeant Hamilton said. “It’s good for these guys to get hands-on experience with the live ones.”

The DFT further enhances the wing’s combat training because the terrain and environment at Hill AFB and the UTTR are very similar to where the wing may find itself deployed in the future.

“This is a great place to train for Afghanistan,” said Maj. Lee Saugstad, the DFT’s project officer and A-10 pilot. “This is much more of a representation of Afghanistan than at home.”

The arid, mountainous terrain and the 4,700-foot elevation on the ground at Hill AFB are similar to conditions the wing has encountered in previous deployments to Afghanistan.

When it comes to training, there’s no substitute for experience with the real thing, according to Major Saugstad.

“There’s something to be said for not playing in your own backyard all the time,” he said. “It’s always a good thing to go somewhere else so we can be prepared to go into a combat situation at a strange field.”



Photo by Lt. Col. David Kurle | **Loaders Tech. Sgt. Butch Portell, Master Sgt. James Kirksey and Staff Sgt. Kenneth Meadows fit a launcher onto a live AGM-65 Maverick missile.**



Spouses

refuel

Photos and story by

Senior Airman Danielle Wolf

Fighter pilot spouses, of 303rd Fighter Squadron, boarded a KC-135R Stratotanker Sept. 13 to watch an A-10 Thunderbolt II refueling mission.

Thirteen spouses had the opportunity to watch the refueling side-by-side with the boom operator onboard an aircraft operated by the 190th Air Refueling Wing, Kansas Air National Guard.

Each spouse was able to crawl to the boom operator's quarters to see refueling operations from his perspective. From there, they were able to put on headsets and communicate with the pilots as they refueled.

"It was cool for Valerie to see what I actually do instead of just coming home every day and telling her about it," said Capt. Chad Carlton, 303rd Fighter Squadron A-10 pilot. "She was really excited when I talked to her after the flight. The wives are always supportive when we deploy, and I think it will help next time I deploy for her to know what exactly it is I'm doing over there."



"The refueling was phenomenal to watch. Through this, all of the wives gained a greater appreciation and understanding for our husbands' jobs."

- Lisa Closen

Wife of Col. David Closen,
442nd Operations Group commander

A-10s refuel over Lake of the Ozarks with spouses aboard tanker



T-Bird #4

Photo by Airman
1st Class Carlin Leslie

Maj. Sean Gustafson talks to a veteran from the 39th Fighter Squadron Association during a meet-and-greet at the Thunderbirds rehearsal Sept. 17.



Reserve F-16 pilot fulfills life-long dream as Thunderbird #4

By Lt. Col. David Kurler

Maj. Sean Gustafson has a simple, but important, message for his fellow Air Force reservists: “If they can dream it, they can do it – the opportunities available to reservists today are truly unlimited.”

The major should know. He’s currently in the middle of a four-year Active Guard and Reserve tour fulfilling his own childhood dream as the number-four (or, slot) pilot for the U.S. Air Force’s demonstration team, the Thunderbirds.

He’s also the first Air Force Reserve pilot ever chosen for the prestigious aerobatics team – flying the F-16 Fighting Falcon in front of millions of spectators.

“I think me being on the team demonstrates reservists are really out there doing every job in the Air Force,” Major Gustafson said. “I think the lines between active duty and reserve are fading because we’re all working and deploying side by side. Reservists are everywhere – we truly are deployed globally.”

In almost two years of traveling around the world with the Thunderbirds, he said he’s met reservists in almost every Air Force specialty code.

“One of the best parts of traveling for the past two years is meeting other reservists,” Major Gustafson said. “They’re excited when they find out there’s a reservist

flying on the team.”

He also said being a Thunderbird pilot is the highlight of his 14-year Air Force career.

It was something I thought I wouldn’t have the opportunity to do once I became a reservist, Major Gustafson said.

“There was never a push to get a reservist on the team until two years ago,” he said.

Like most reservists, the major started on active duty and after a decade, he began a civilian career flying passenger jets for Delta Airlines. He also continued serving in the military and joined the Air Force Reserve’s 482nd Fighter Wing at Homestead Air Reserve Base, Fla.

Two years ago, Major Gustafson applied for and was chosen as a Thunderbird pilot after competing against pilots from the regular Air Force and the Air National Guard.

He credits his experience as an F-16 instructor pilot with his success. With more than 2,000 hours in the Fighting Falcon, he’s the team’s “high-time” pilot (and the only one over the 2,000-hour mark).

“One thing about the Air Force Reserve that’s an asset is our level of experience,” he said. “The Reserve has an incredible amount of experience because they’ve been performing the same missions so long and there’s more continuity in a Reserve unit because people tend to stay in the same unit their whole careers.”

During this – his second – season

with the Thunderbirds, Major Gustafson will fly a red, white and blue F-16 at 73 performances. He will end his stint with the team after its last show in November and finish his AGR tour at Air Force Reserve Headquarters at Robins Air Force Base, Ga.

“The biggest job satisfaction is having people thank me for my service,” he said. “What our generation is doing right now to preserve American freedoms is fantastic when you think about it.”

Major Gustafson is joined on the team by Staff Sgt. Andrué Donaldson, an Air Force Reserve crew chief who was chosen for the team in 2010 from the Reserve’s 926th Group at Nellis AFB, Nev.

“The young reservists of today should focus on their strengths, develop those and keep in mind we’re being trained to do the same mission as our active-duty counterparts,” Major Gustafson said. “The total Air Force is truly one team.”



Major Gustafson performed with the Thunderbirds Sept. 18 and 19 at the 2010

Wings over Whiteman air show. To see photos of the air show, visit www.442fw.afrc.af.mil or www.whiteman.af.mil.

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TO THE FAMILY OF:

Tech. Sgt. Rick Jones takes aim at a clay pigeon at a modified skeet-shooting competition during the 442nd Fighter Wing family picnic Sept. 11. (Photo by Lt. Col. David Kurle)



A small body of determined spirits fired by an unquenchable faith in their mission can alter the course of history.

- Mohandas Gandhi

442nd Fighter Wing Online - www.442fw.afrc.af.mil