

Pilot for a day

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442nd Fighter Wing

CES warriors prep for ORI



**442nd MXG earns
AFRC award**

Air Force Reserve Command

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Completing EPRs and OPRs on vPC-GR

Take steps to prevent late reports

By Maj. Joe Walter

442nd Mission Support Flight commander

Mentioning the acronym vPC-GR, which stands for virtual Processing Center-Guard and Reserve, conjures up different thoughts for each one of us.

This new web-based system, used to route performance reports, was supposed to simplify and help expedite the routing of reports. Has this occurred? In my opinion, it has not.

As of the Jan. 10 and 11 unit-training assembly, the wing still had 185 late enlisted and officer performance reports.

I think the reasons for this are twofold. One, the system is not as user-friendly and intuitive as we had hoped; and two, our wing's Airmen need more exposure and education on the process. While, we don't have much control over the actual vPC-GR system, we can help educate and guide those who write and receive performance reports through the new process.

To achieve success in significantly reducing the number of late reports in the wing, it will require the cooperation and assistance from Airmen at all levels. Below, I have seven suggestions for achieving this success.

1. Acceptance – We first have to accept that this will be the way to process performance reports. Whether it be done in the vPC-GR or done in the Defense Integrated Military Human Resources System (DIMHRS), scheduled to come on line in the next year or so, the electronic routing of reports is expected to remain.

2. Establish – All Airmen need to establish an account in the vPC-GR. Reports are sent to commanders on a monthly basis documenting those who do not have accounts. As of the Jan. 10 UTA there were 122 members of the 442nd Fighter Wing who still need to establish their vPC-GR accounts.

3. Notification – The vPC-GR will notify you if you have a pending action but for you to stay informed, you have to request notification in your vPC-GR profile. You can select to be notified at your military e-mail address, civilian e-mail address or both. There are no other established notification procedures, so it's highly recommended you choose to be notified by the vPC-GR. Not doing so can lead to pending

actions sitting in your box and adding time to the process.

4. Data Accuracy – It is each individual's responsibility to ensure data that pertains to them is accurate. It is highly recommended everyone review the information in the Virtual Military Personnel Flight, or vMPF, on a regular basis for accuracy. The vMPF can be accessed from the Air Force Personnel Center Web site. Inaccurate data can lead to a multitude of problems. In the evaluation process, it can cause significant delays.

5. Know your subordinates – Each supervisor should know who their subordinates are and when their performance reports are due without needing to be told. This truly must be the first line of attack for writing a performance report. Don't count on a system or someone else to remind you. It's

about supervisors taking care of their subordinates.

6. Follow-up – Once a performance report has been initiated in the vPC-GR, don't forget about it until you know it is complete. Ask questions to the rater, additional rater, commander and the person being rated to ensure they have done their part. Losing sight of where a report is and whether it's being acted upon after you have done your part often leads to coordination stagnation.

7. Know where to find help resources –

Look to your unit EPR and OPR monitors as your first line of help in answering questions you have. EPR and OPR monitors should seek expert guidance from the Career Enhancement Office in the 442nd Military Personnel Flight. Also, there is data in both the vPC-GR and the Alpha Roster available to monitors, commanders, first sergeants, commanders' support staffs and other select staff to assist with tracking, monitoring and forecasting performance reports. Ask what they are or how to access them if you don't know already. You will be surprised at what is out there that can help you.

I know Citizen Airmen in the 442nd Fighter Wing are frustrated with regard to routing reports via the vPC-GR. To significantly reduce the number of late performance reports and keep them at a minimum requires hard work and patience from all of us. If the seven steps I've outlined are followed, we will be well on our way to achieving outstanding results.



PHOTO BY MAJ. DAVID KURLLE

Maj. Joe Walter offers seven steps to help wing supervisors and Airmen prevent late personnel performance reports. Major Walter is the commander of the 442nd Mission Support Flight.

MOHAWK

442nd Fighter Wing

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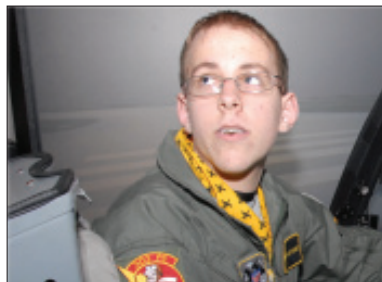
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March 2009
Charge-of-quarters



SENIOR MASTER SGT. TODD SIELEMAN
442ND AIRCRAFT
MAINTENANCE SQUADRON

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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: Staff Sgt. Darren Hardt, 442nd Civil Engineers Squadron, carefully approaches a 'prisoner' during the squadron's Operational Readiness Inspection exercises in January. For more, see pages six and seven. (Photo by Master Sgt. Bill Huntington)

MOHAWK

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442nd Fighter Wing Tip of the Spear

MASTER SGT. PAMELA DOHERTY
442ND MEDICAL SQUADRON

Master Sgt. Pamela Doherty serves as the Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge of the 442nd Medical Squadron Dental Clinic.

Representing the finest role model of a senior NCO, she continuously, without hesitation, exemplifies service before self. With current and chronically elevated, dental schedules, she motivates her staff and the providers at all times to keep pushing to get the job done with peak efficiency.

During last year's Aerospace Expeditionary Force rotation to Afghanistan, she demonstrated selfless dedication to ensure that all deploying personnel were within deployment standards, able to depart without complication and enhanced overall operational mission success.



442nd MXG earns Maintenance

By Maj. David Kurle

The 442nd Maintenance Group can add another award to the hallway leading to the wing's 5-Bay Hangar – the Air Force Reserve Command Maintenance Effectiveness Award as the best medium-sized aircraft maintenance unit in the command for Fiscal Year 2008.

“It’s kind of nice to be known as the best,” said Lt. Col. Michael Wood, the group’s commander since Dec. 6, 2008. “This unit has always been known as one of the best A-10 maintenance units in the entire Air Force.”

Among the group’s accomplishments in 2008 was a 45-day deployment of A-10s and maintenance specialists to Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan, to produce combat sorties in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

“What I think put us over the top for the award, was

the deployment (to Afghanistan),” Colonel Wood said. “I always say, ‘quality maintenance equals combat effectiveness.’”

While deployed, Citizen Airmen in the 442nd MXG produced more than 600 A-10 combat sorties, which put more than 2,500 hours on the wing’s aircraft. The amount of sorties represented a 17-percent increase over previous A-10 units at Bagram.

A deployment halfway around the world wasn’t the only accomplishment of the 442nd MXG – at its home base the men and women in the unit provided combat capability every day to the tune of almost 3,500 sorties.

During training missions from Whiteman Air Force Base, the wing’s pilots dropped more than 240 bombs and fired more than 94,000 rounds of 30-millimeter ammunition – all of which had to be stored, maintained, prepared for flight and loaded on aircraft by 442nd MXG



ance Effectiveness Award

maintainers.

In November 2007, the group finished installing smart-multi-function color displays in all 27 of the wing's A-10s, representing a major electronics and combat-capability upgrade for the wing's pilots.

From February through May, 442nd maintainers completed another electronics upgrade to the wing's aircraft to enable pilots to talk "beyond-line-of-sight" using satellites for communication.

After its Bagram deployment, the 442nd MXG began work on three time-compliance technical orders to identify and repair wing cracks in certain A-10s.

And, in October, the group provided the majority of the maintenance effort for 14 A-10 teams competing in Hawgsmoke 2008 in Salina, Kan.

"We accomplished everything that was asked of us and still maintained the highest standards of quality in all

of our maintenance shops," said Chief Master Sgt. Steve Brazeal, 442nd Maintenance Squadron superintendent. "We do as much as any maintenance group in the Air Force and our planes still look the best of any in the A-10 community as far as appearance."

"The Airmen in the 442nd MXG should be proud of the fact that they have been recognized as the best of the best out of all the maintenance organizations in Air Force Reserve Command," Colonel Wood said. "This is all due to their tremendous efforts."

Far from resting on the group's laurels, Colonel Wood is focused on 2009 and the challenges in store for the 442nd MXG.

"Our main focus this year is nothing but our upcoming operational readiness inspection," he said. "My focus other than the ORI is making sure everyone is getting back to the basics – maintenance-101."

From practical to TACTICAL

Engineers enhance warfighting skills in exercise

By Master Sgt. Bill Huntington



PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. TOM TALBERT

442nd Civil Engineer Squadron troops donned full “battle rattle” and took to the field during a January unit-training-assembly exercise to focus on improving tactical skills, including individual and team movement, sweep and clear operations, entry control point and vehicle search, and enemy prisoner of war challenging.

The training is part of the ground-combat skills used by the CE troops and will be employed in transition day activities during October’s operational readiness inspection.

“All of those things will be part of the ORI,” said Master Sgt. Nathan Hooton, 442nd CES. “(We’ll need) to show that we have a working knowledge to actually perform them.”

To ensure the training was accurate and effective, the engineers enlisted the support of 442nd Security Forces Squadron members.

“The focus was to establish a foundation in each of these areas that could be built upon

over the coming months,” said Master Sgt. Mitch Dorl, 442nd SFS.

Sergeant Hooton said his troops were very grateful to SFS for the training and planned to put it to good use in exercises over the next several months before the ORI. He said that each successive exercise will be increasingly more intense than the previous one. The goal is to have the engineers used to operating in tactical gear while performing their usual jobs, effectively defending their positions against enemy attack and also making certain they are at their sharpest for the ORI.

“It was very positive,” Sergeant Hooton said of the experience. “It motivated everybody to let them know where they are and what they need to do to get ready.”

Sergeant Dorl said the CE troops were great students and came through the training well.

“The hustle and cooperation seen throughout the day was outstanding,” Sergeant Dorl said. “It was obvious from the beginning - the warriors came to train, and indeed they did!”



PHOTO BY MASTER SGT. BILL HUNTINGTON



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PHOTO BY MASTER SGT. BILL HUNTINGTON

Clockwise from above: Tech. Sgt. Kim Levy and fellow engineers patrol a road in the exercise area. Tech. Sgt. Bob Orton, 442nd Security Forces Squadron, (center) explains possible improvised explosive device placement on vehicles to Staff Sgt. Thomas Davis, Master Sgt. Kurt Kissel, Master Sgt. Katie Carr and Tech. Sgt. Mike Caume. Civil engineers drive tactical vehicles along the streets of Whiteman Air Force Base enroute to the training site on the north end of the base. Part of the training program included convoy operations. To keep his skills sharp, Tech. Sgt. Mike Caume, goes through weapons clearing procedures. Reflected in the mirror of his High-Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle (HUMVEE), Master Sgt. David Anderson waits for the signal to move out with the rest of the CES convoy.

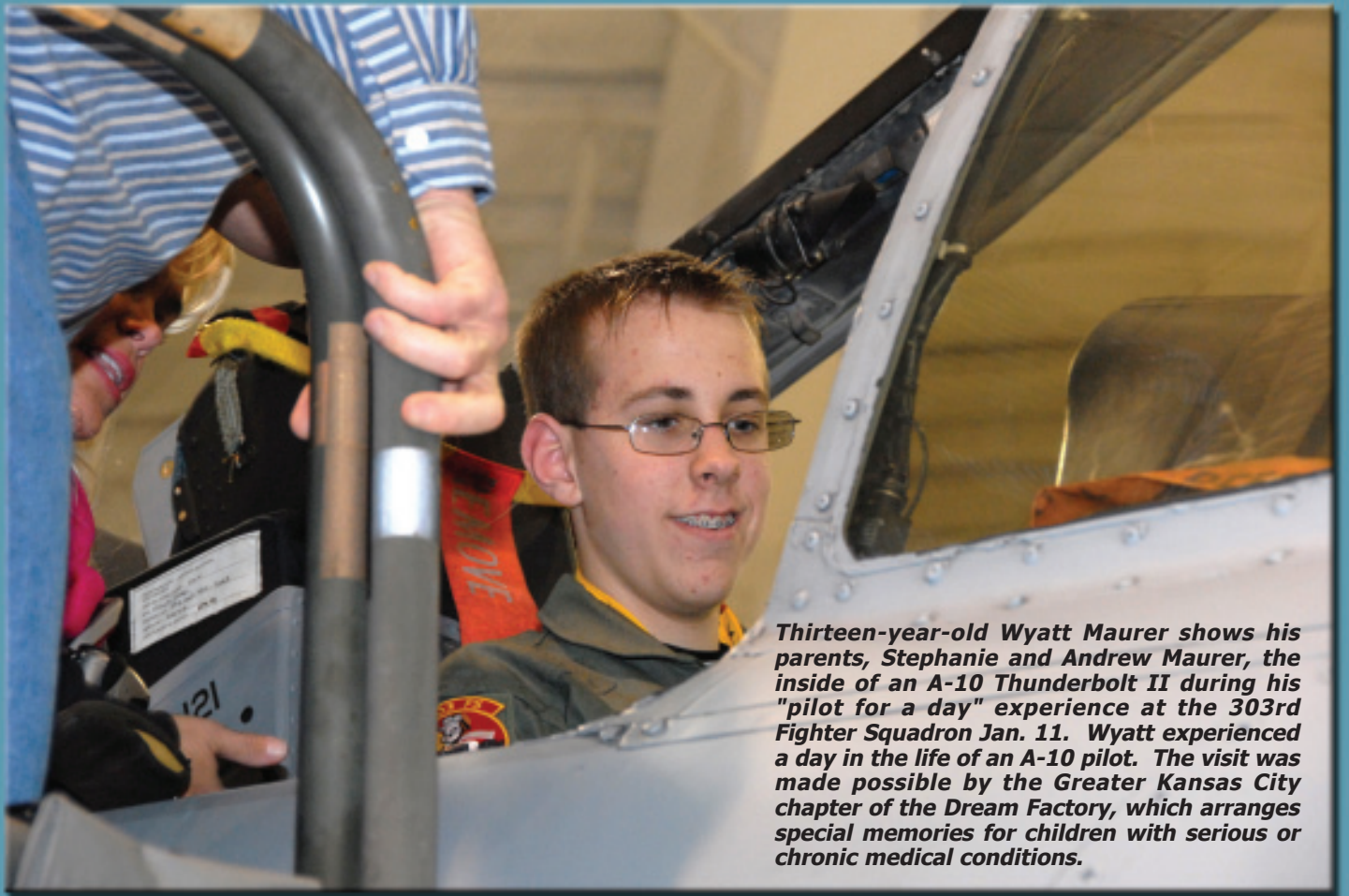


PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. TOM TALBERT



PHOTO BY MASTER SGT. BILL HUNTINGTON





Thirteen-year-old Wyatt Maurer shows his parents, Stephanie and Andrew Maurer, the inside of an A-10 Thunderbolt II during his "pilot for a day" experience at the 303rd Fighter Squadron Jan. 11. Wyatt experienced a day in the life of an A-10 pilot. The visit was made possible by the Greater Kansas City chapter of the Dream Factory, which arranges special memories for children with serious or chronic medical conditions.

PHOTO BY MAJ. DAVID KURLE

303rd Fighter Squadron helps dream come true

PHOTO BY MAJ. DAVID KURLE



Wyatt tries out a parachute harness and life preserver during his "pilot for a day" experience at the 303rd Fighter Squadron. Wyatt was treated to a ride in the squadron's A-10 Thunderbolt II flight simulator and a tour of an actual A-10.

Pilot for a Day

By Staff Sgt. Kent Kagarise

Many people set goals for their lives but there are some who know from the day they're born that there are dreams they may never be able to achieve but dare to dream anyway, without regard to the obstacles.

Such is the case of Wyatt Maurer, a tall, 13-year-old young man from Lawrence Kan., who was diagnosed before he was born with chronic kidney failure, a condition which led to surgery when he was only six-days-old.

Today, Wyatt has one functioning kidney with the other operating at 90 percent. He will most likely need a transplant in the near future. Yet the wide-eyed teen has looked to the skies since he was four years old and planned to fly through those skies on the wings of the U.S. Air Force.

Jan. 11, Wyatt visited the 303rd Fighter Squadron with the help of Heather McGinnis, Director of Volunteers for the Greater Kansas City chapter of Dream Factory, a non-profit organization of volunteers that help children who are seriously and chronically ill.

cally ill realize at least a part of their dreams.

With the help of Dream Factory, Wyatt was able to get a sense of what it was like to be an A-10 pilot for one day as he “flew” the 303rd’s A-10 Thunderbolt II simulator, sat in an actual A-10, received a personal tour of the squadron’s operations and checked out a Whiteman Air Force Base T-38 Talon up close.

“It’s always really great to see a child’s face light up,” Ms. McGinnis said. “Most of the dreams we try to make come true center around travel. To actually be able to bring Wyatt this close to reality is unbelievable.”

The Dream Factory contacted Maj. David Willette, an Army AH-64 Apache pilot, currently based at Fort Leavenworth, Kan., to begin the process of bringing Wyatt’s dreams to fruition.

“I contacted a few of my Air Force peers and asked if they had any contacts,” Major Willette said. “The day after I began asking around I got 20 e-mails from guys who knew pilots with the 303rd. Just like that – it was done.”

“We couldn’t have done it without Maj. Willette,” Ms. McGinnis said.

The planning for Wyatt’s day with the 303rd FS began in Oct. 2008 and as time drew near for this day, Wyatt’s anxiety grew higher.

“He hasn’t had a full night’s sleep for about two weeks,” said Mrs. Stephanie Maurer, Wyatt’s mother. “He has been so excited. It really has gone beyond any expectations we’ve had.”

Wyatt’s day began in the 303rd’s life-support ready room with Capt. Chad Rogers, a 303rd Fighter Squadron A-10 pilot, detailing what a pilot’s day is like and explaining the uses for all of the equipment the squadron’s pilots must wear in flight. From there the teen and his parents went into the flight simulator where Wyatt was able to get a glimpse of what it’s like to fly an A-10.

“It was awesome! The resistance was a little surprising as I steered,” Wyatt said. “But it wasn’t much different from my

Playstation-2 flying games.”

His video game flying experience was evident in his very smooth landing of the A-10 in the simulator.

“Good job! You’re a natural Wyatt!” Mrs. Maurer said.

After dropping bombs and shooting 30-millimeter cannon rounds in the simulator, Wyatt experienced an actual A-10 and was able to get up close and personal by sitting in the pilot’s seat while Capt. Rogers explained the controls and instruments.

“There were a lot of gadgets in there,” Wyatt said. “That part was much different than my P.S. 2.”

The tour of the A-10 was followed by lunch at the Base Exchange where Wyatt was quite an attention-getter wearing his 303rd-issued flight suit complete with patches and a 442nd Fighter Wing name tag.

“Gosh, do you see all of them looking at me?” Wyatt said to his father, Mr. Andrew Maurer.

“They must think you’re a new pilot, being brought into the Air Force under some new top-secret plan,” Mr. Maurer said.

Lunch concluded with a group of A-10 pilots who answered questions from the young, aspiring pilot and had their picture taken with him.

“That was so cool! I want to be one of them,” Wyatt said.

Capt. Rogers and the other pilots were able to impart some words of wisdom to Wyatt before his, “pilot for a day” came to an end all too soon.

“He’s hopeful, as he should be. He’s a good kid,” said Capt. Rogers, who organized Wyatt’s visit to the 303rd. “I told him to set himself up for success through education and physical fitness. Succeed in every way you can. If you have a strong enough will – it’s possible.”

Those were wise words from a pilot to a young man facing some very tall hurdles, and very good advice for any Airman striving to achieve their goals without such an intimidating obstacle.



PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. KENT KAGARISE

Wyatt adjusts the control stick of the 303rd Fighter Squadron's A-10 Thunderbolt II flight simulator.

Wyatt asks a question to Capt. Chad Rogers, 303rd Fighter Squadron A-10 pilot, while at the controls of the squadron's A-10 Thunderbolt II simulator Jan. 11. Captain Rogers served as the point of contact and tour guide for the 13-year-old's visit to the squadron.



PHOTO BY MAJ. DAVID KIRLE

Wing announces its best of 2008



**Master Sgt. Robert S. Safley,
Senior NCO of the Year,
442nd Operations Support Flight**



**Retired
Senior Master Sgt.
Ernie B. Ferguson, Jr.,
First Sergeant
of the Year,
303rd Fighter Squadron**



**Staff Sgt. Kenneth W. Cliburn,
NCO of the Year,
442nd Security Forces Squadron**



Fourth Quarter 08 winners



**Senior NCO,
Master Sgt.
Donald L. Murphy,
442nd MDS**



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



**Airman,
Senior Airman
Robert G. Long,
442nd
Logistics
Readiness
Squadron**



**Staff Sgt. Jena L. Hayes,
Airman of the Year,
442nd Medical Squaron**



Services flight adds food to fight during wing's February exercise

By Staff Sgt. Kent Kagarise

The 442nd Fighter Wing's services flight took advantage of a field-training opportunity during an operational-readiness exercise February 7 and 8 when they prepared unitized group rations for the 442nd Civil Engineer Squadron.

The food service specialists prepared and served a breakfast consisting of scrambled eggs, sausage links, hash browns, waffles and spiced apples.

The wing is preparing for its upcoming operational-readiness inspection in October and pinpointing those areas where minor adjustments might be made in order to make the wing more mission ready.

"We've had a lot of folks retire and are working toward training Airmen to fill those spots," said Tech Sgt. Eddie Norton, services flight non-commissioned officer in charge. "We hope to

have all our troops familiar with the routine so that when the operational-readiness inspection comes around everybody will know everybody else's job."

Although many of the faces in the food-service section are unfamiliar to one another, they are pressing toward a familiar goal, which continues to unify them with each passing month.

"I was active duty four years and two months, where I was the go-to guy," said Senior Airman J.P. Summers, 442nd services flight and a Raytown Police officer in his civilian occupation. "I felt like I lost a lot of knowledge with my break in service. I still want to be the go-to guy so I've got to get it back. If a fellow Airman goes down I want to be more than ready to fill their shoes."

For many Airmen, throughout the wing, the exercises have been a chance to apply field training for the first time since technical school. The food-service section is no exception. What was once learned is now put into action in a fashion to prove combat readiness.

"I've been in the Air Force now for six months, so from technical school to here I haven't had much down time so nothing is all that shocking yet," said Airman Exzavery Watsonglaze, services specialist. "The biggest thing I've learned the past few days is nothing goes quite as planned. I just want to learn my job the best I can so I can be an asset to the team here and wherever else the Air Force calls me."

No matter the rank of any particular Airman the common theme is there will be obstacles to overcome during an ORE or an ORI. More importantly those same obstacles can occur in the field of battle.

"We had some problems getting the Babbington Burner up and going, which means we couldn't heat the tray rations," said Senior Airman Leonard Marks, 442nd Services Flight. "What's encouraging is that no matter the problem, with enough troubleshooting, just about anything can be solved, and that's exactly what happened."

For a 15-year Marine and now two months in the Air Force, Tech. Sergeant Everett Samuels of the 442nd Services Flight said there isn't much difference between the branches when a person talks about the mess section.

"New and old we are all learning something every day," he said. "I'm familiar with everything in the kitchen but just like all non-commissioned officers, the challenge is to impart that same knowledge to our young Airmen."

Senior Airman Vernon Ivy was in Air Force intelligence for ten years – 12 years ago. Last March, Airman Ivy returned to the Air Force, where he calls the 442nd Services Flight his home.

"It's been a big change – not a bad one. The good thing about this job is we have an opportunity to affect everybody," Senior Airman Ivy said. "If the food isn't good or timely we have a major impact on morale and mission. We plan on that impact being a positive one."

There is a wide variety of jobs throughout the Air Force. Many professions Airman may never have the opportunity to come in contact with. Food service is an arena all Airman see up close and personal from the beginning of an Air Force career all the way to retirement. Meal-time is often looked forward to throughout a rigorous day of training and can be fuel for the fight. The 442nd Services Flight intends for that fuel to be high octane.



PHOTO BY MASTER SGT. BILL HUNTINGTON

Tech. Sgt. Everett Samuels, a food services craftsman with the 442nd Services Flight, prepares scrambled eggs for breakfast for fellow reservists during an operational-readiness exercise Feb. 8. The 442nd Fighter Wing will hold at least three more exercises before inspectors arrive from Air Combat Command to hold the wing's operational readiness inspection, scheduled for Oct. 23.

Some of the tools of the operational readiness inspection trade are displayed on the floor of the 5-bay hangar for a 442nd Maintenance Group post-attack-reconnaissance-team training session during the January unit training assembly. (Photo by Master Sgt. Bill Huntington)

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WHITEMAN AFB MO 65305-5070

TO THE FAMILY OF:



“I feel like we are now on a path that places us somewhat ahead of the game. We know what to expect, we have a plan, all that remains is for us to execute.”

-- Col. James Mackey, 442nd Fighter Wing, vice commander, speaking about the wing's ORI preparations

442nd Fighter Wing on line -- www.442fw.afrc.af.mil