

# M<sup>●</sup>HAWK

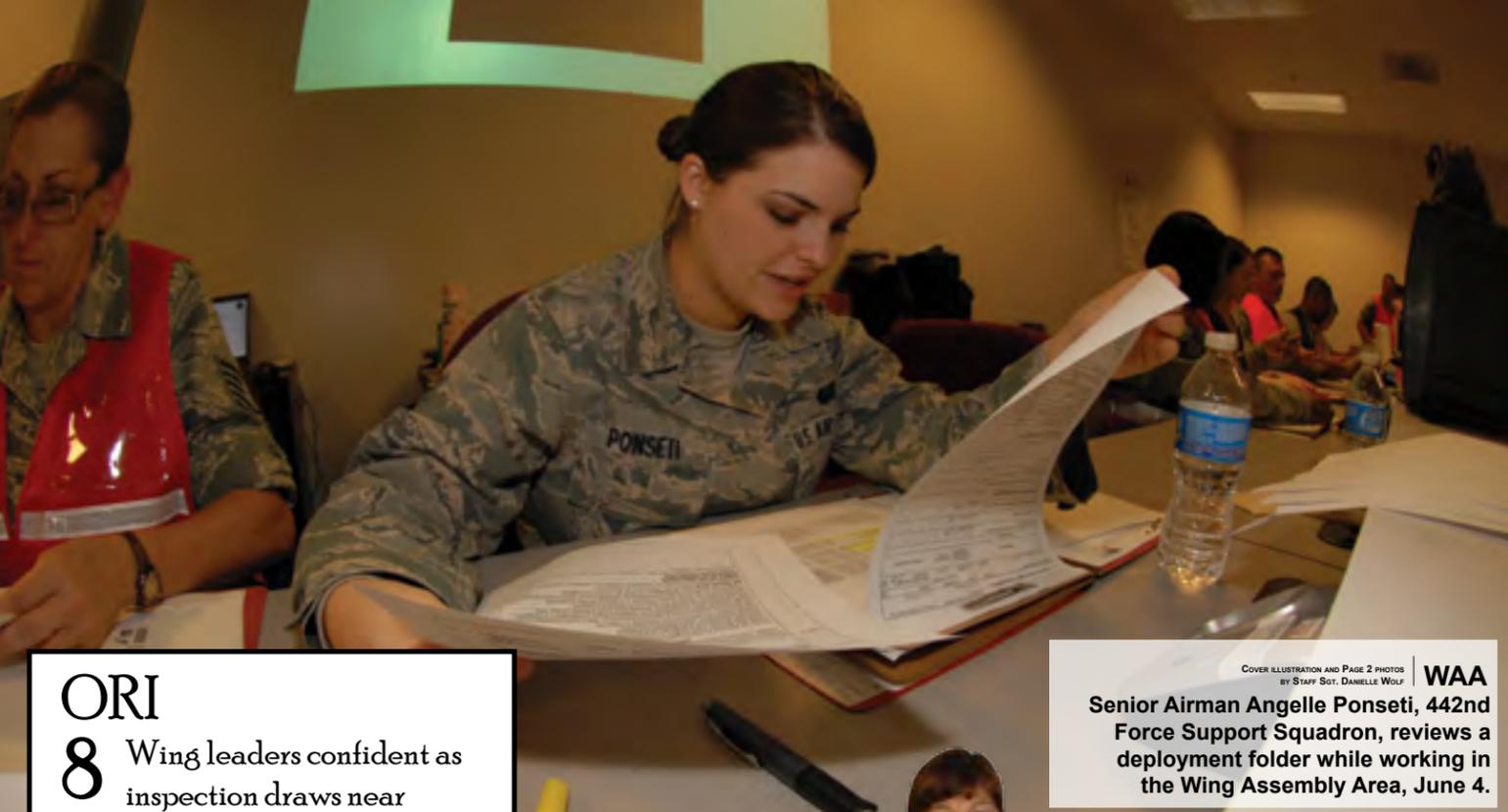
442ND FIGHTER WING

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July 2011

WHITEMAN AFB, Mo.





**ORI**  
**8** Wing leaders confident as inspection draws near

COVER ILLUSTRATION AND PAGE 2 PHOTOS BY STAFF SGT. DANIELLE WOLF  
**WAA**  
**Senior Airman Angelle Ponseti, 442nd Force Support Squadron, reviews a deployment folder while working in the Wing Assembly Area, June 4.**



**TECH. SGT. KARIN MOORE**  
**442ND MISSION SUPPORT GROUP**  
**442ND FIGHTER WING**

**Tip of the Spear: July 2011**

Tech. Sgt. Karin Moore is the vehicle management and analysis technician for the 442nd Logistics Readiness Squadron. She is also employed in the same role as a civilian for the 509th Bomb Wing.

She is charged with the management of 720 Air Force vehicles valued in excess of \$35 million, assigned to the 509th BW and 442nd Fighter Wing. In this role, she has led challenges of mandatory contracts requiring vehicle maintenance to purchase all supply-listed tires through the Defense Logistics Agency, which has led to improved vehicle out-of-commission rates and resulted in more than \$29,000 in annual savings.

Sergeant Moore was selected as a member of the Air Combat Command Inspector General team as a result of her superior knowledge, skill and abilities.

She recently inspected 126 nuclear-certified vehicles assigned to Whiteman AFB and reviewed all documentation resulting in the unit passing the Air Force Global Strike Command Nuclear Surety Inspection on the first attempt – the first host vehicle maintenance to pass the inspection with zero findings or discrepancies. Sergeant Moore’s professionalism and dedication to detail has resulted in laudatory comments from multiple visitors and inspection teams.

She is the consummate Citizen Airman and her appearance, attitude and accomplishments make her this month’s Tip of the Spear for the 442nd Mission Support Group.

**Commander’s commentary**



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I hope you’re having a great summer and spending quality time with your friends and families. Earlier this month, I had the opportunity to spend the 4th of July with my family in Washington, D.C. Watching fireworks over the U.S. Capitol building was a great way to celebrate our nation’s independence. It was inspirational to stand between the Washington and Lincoln Memorials and reflect on the sacrifices our forefathers made so we can enjoy living in a free country. Thank you for carrying on their proud legacy of service in the defense of our nation.

Here at Whiteman, we’re about to begin our last readiness exercise before our phase-one inspection in August. This is our last chance to fine tune the procedures we’ve been striving to perfect. We still have some things to work on, but thanks to your hard work and attention to detail we are a great flight path for success. As an example, in May our deployment bag inspections had about a 40 percent pass rate, but in June it improved to better than 90 percent. I’m certain we’ll see even better results in July.

The single most important weapon we will bring to the ORI will be the outstanding attitude that impressed the 10th Air Force inspection team so much during our June exercise. When it was hot, and you were tired, and things were not going as planned (which will inevitably happen at some point when the “fog of war” hits our inspection), you had great attitudes

and turned things around. When inspectors told you to change the way you were doing things, you didn’t complain. You thanked the inspector and followed the instructions, or forwarded them up the chain if you needed more clarification.

This is what the IG will be looking for in August, and it’s what we expect during the exercise this month too. Positive attitudes in the face of adversity show that we, as individuals, take pride in our jobs and that we will work together as a team to overcome any challenge. Thank you for maintaining those great attitudes despite everything you’ve been through in the last three years - it’s because of that dedication that we WILL win the ORI in August.

We already have several personnel including pilots and maintainers from Moody deployed to the combat zone, and this month we’ll send off about 35 of our civil engineers from Whiteman. Make sure to wish them well when you see them, and as we always try to do in the 442nd FW, remind them their families will be well cared for by our family of reservists here.

Make sure to flip through your Mohawk in upcoming months too, to see what your friends and fellow Airmen in the 442nd CES are doing on their deployment.

After we win the ‘war’ in August, we’ve got some exciting things ahead.

In September, your families will have the opportunity to come to Whiteman AFB, Mo. to celebrate our wing’s success. The family day committee is working hard

to make sure there are events for everyone to participate in and excellent food to eat. I’m already excited for this year’s feast – steak and potatoes!

Finally, toward the end of the year we’ll be packing our mobility bags again, but this time, it’ll be for real!

442nd Fighter Wing Airmen from here and Barksdale AFB, La., will be gearing up for a deployment. The last three years of ORI preparation will be put to good use when we head overseas to provide close air support for coalition forces on the ground. The Air Expeditionary Force is scheduled to last approximately three months and the package will include reservists mainly from our operations and maintenance groups.

We’ve got a busy year ahead of us. We had a nice long break between the last unit training assembly and this one, and I hope you took the time to rest and relax – because the ops tempo is about to increase as we enter the final stretch to the ORI. I will be alongside you the entire way. When you do your last-minute bag checks the night before the exercise and inspection, just know – I’m probably at home doing the same thing. When you have to wake up at 0400 to exercise because you’ve got a long, busy day of inspection ahead of you, just know – I’m probably hitting the pavement too.

I’m proud to be serving alongside each and every one of you. It’s an honor to be your commander.



10:02:48

PHOTOS AND STORY BY STAFF SGT. DANIELLE WOLF

**The following takes place between the hours of 10 a.m. and 11 a.m. the day of the wing's operational readiness exercise, June 5.**

Senior Master Sgt. Rodney Kennedy is the superintendent of the 442nd Logistics Readiness Squadron, Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo.

10:02 A.M.

"O.K., we have an input, 'Exercise, exercise, exercise,'" Sergeant Kennedy says. "We have a conscientious objector. We need to find out where he works and who he is."

Three inspectors sit back to watch Sergeant Kennedy in action.

Within the next three minutes, Sergeant Kennedy answers the phone twice. Both callers are requesting information that is both necessary and timely – so Sergeant Kennedy must switch gears from the input to help the people on the other end of the line.

Staff Sgt. Peter (P.J.) Koontz, the only other reservist in the room, takes over. He begins flipping through binders and mak-

ing phone calls in response to the input.

10:05 A.M.

With confidence that Sergeant Koontz has the situation under control, Sergeant Kennedy begins briefing the inspectors how the wing solved issues with building pallets and correcting paperwork.

10:07 A.M.

Sergeant Kennedy pops up from the table where he's briefing the IG to answer a phone call.

"...so that's how we solved the pallet issue, 'Check, got that done!'" he says, returning to the inspectors and emphasizing the checkmark with his index finger. "We have to have the pallets and the paperwork right, but (one particular pallet) may as well have a bull's-eye on it. It screams, 'Come inspect me!' so it has to be right."

The inspectors laugh.

10:20 A.M.

Sergeant Kennedy answers the phone again.

In the meantime, Sergeant Koontz quietly works in the corner of the room. Every few minutes the phone rings and he's forced to switch gears to answer questions from supervisors around the wing. His focus though, still rests on the conscientious-objector input.

The wing commander will have to evaluate the fitness of the Airman to deploy and establish disciplinary actions if the Airman refuses. At this point, there's no time for adversity – not even when it's simulated.

"Sergeant Koontz, I think we're going to have to change the processing time for chalk five," Sergeant Kennedy says. "How many people are scheduled to process?"

Sergeant Koontz replies: "105 maintainers, four (civil engineers), six fighter wing staff, two medics, six security forces and

SEE KENNEDY, PAGE 9



Senior Master Sgt. Mike Bax, munitions system specialist, 442nd Maintenance Group

HELLO my name is  
veteran husband MIKE  
SMSgt Bax  
employee Citizen Airman

Story by Jeremy P. Amick

Mr. Amick is a public affairs officer for the Silver Star Families of America. He is the author of three published books and regularly writes veteran-centric articles for various newspapers throughout Missouri.

**A military-civilian symmetry**  
**Reservist strikes balance between military, civilian careers**

For someone working two jobs, it can be exasperating to learn to cope with the challenges that develop from competing demands.

However, local veteran, Senior Master Sgt. Mike Bax, has successfully subdued such concerns while working at RR Donnelly and serving several tours in the Air Force Reserve.

Born in Jefferson City, Mo. in 1964, Sergeant Bax was raised in nearby St. Anthony, Mo. In 1983, he graduated from St. Thomas Seminary High School in Hannibal, Mo.

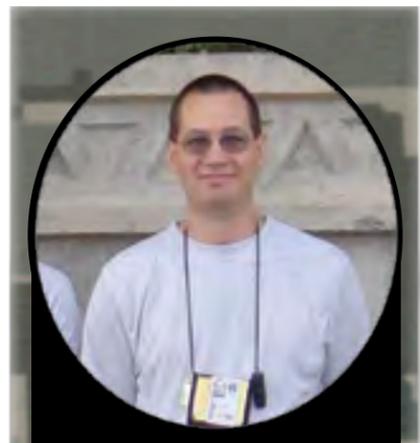
With an early desire to pursue a career as a priest with the Catholic Church, he enrolled in Conception Seminary College in northwestern Missouri and completed two years of school.

"With the seminary, your initial time in school allowed you to explore your options and determine if you wanted to really be a member of the clergy," Sergeant Bax said. "I decided that it really wasn't for me and that I would — at that time — rather see the world."

To that end, Bax decided to fulfill his wishes for travel through an outlet selected by many young people — the U.S. Air Force.

Enlisting in 1985, the newly minted Air-

man traveled to Lackland Air Force Base, San Antonio, Texas, graduating in late



Senior Master Sgt. Michael Bax is a munitions system specialist with the 442nd Maintenance Group at Whiteman AFB, Mo. As a civilian, Sergeant Bax is a shift manager in the bindery department at RR Donnelly, a print-related business, with a location in Missouri. Like most reservists, Sergeant Bax must balance his time between his family, civilian career and military commitment.

January 1986. From there, he was sent to complete his advanced training at Lowry AFB, Denver, Colo., where he received instruction as a munitions systems specialist.

"At our advanced training," Sergeant Bax said, "we learned how to build, store and transport bombs used by various aircraft. This included the installation fuses and other related components."

His first two years in active service were spent at Luke AFB, Ariz.

Sergeant Bax said he was somewhat discouraged by his stateside placement and requested a transfer to Germany.

"At that time, there really weren't a lot of temporary duty options, so I requested the transfer so that I could travel," he said.

With his request soon granted, Sergeant Bax was transferred to Bitburg AB, Germany, where he spent the remaining two years of his enlistment.

In March 1990, he made the decision to leave the Air Force in order to finish the education he had begun a few years earlier.

"I returned to the seminary and completed a bachelor's degree in psychology with a minor in philosophy and religion," Sergeant Bax said.

Using his GI Bill benefits earned in the

SEE BAX, PAGE 11



# Downrange, up to speed

Photos and story by Senior Airman Wesley Wright

Approximately 35 reservists from the 442nd Civil Engineers Squadron are scheduled to deploy to Southwest Asia in August.

The Citizen Airmen will support U.S. Army and coalition forward operations.

**Lt. Col. Mark Davison**, commander of the 442nd CES, and **Senior Master Sgt. Nathan Hooton**, 442nd CES operations superintendent, are preparing their unit for its first mobilization.

"I've been here 12 years," Sergeant Hooton said, "and this is the first mobilization ever for this unit. Our primary mission here at the 442nd CES is to prepare for deployment."

The squadron does not have a stateside base-sustainment mission filling local work orders like its active-duty counterpart

here, he added.

Usually, the 442nd CES deploys and accomplishes their mission at overseas installations. The upcoming mission is new to the squadron because the 442nd will be operating in forward locations.

"This is absolutely not a traditional CE deployment where you go to a base and maintain facilities," Colonel Davison said. "This is the first time we've had such a critical tasking of going outside the wire."

Sergeant Hooton said this mission would be new for the squadron.

"On this mission we are starting to do some specialized things," Sergeant Hooton said. "Now we're going out to other people and fixing things outside of a base. The requirements are the same, but

how we're doing the job and how we are implementing and utilizing those skills is a little more different than it's ever been."

Colonel Davison agreed.

"I've told the guys, this is pretty much going to be the peak opportunity of your career to use your skills," he said. "There will be no other time in your career when you use more of your skills and tactics than on this deployment."

Before deploying to Southwest Asia, the deploying reservists will first attend combat skills training at Fort Bliss, Texas.

"We will be going for several weeks of training," Sergeant Hooton said. "This is deployment-specific training for the mission we are about to perform."

Colonel Davison said the squadron is supporting the Army on this deployment.

"CST is meant to get us in line with Army tactics," he said. "We need to work closely with them in this training."

Three other CE units from across the United States will be integrating with the 442nd at CST.

"A key element of the combat skills training we will be going through is to meld together as one cohesive unit," Colonel Davison said, "In order to function properly in a wartime environment, it would be beneficial to get to know the habits and skills of the people before you get (there.)"

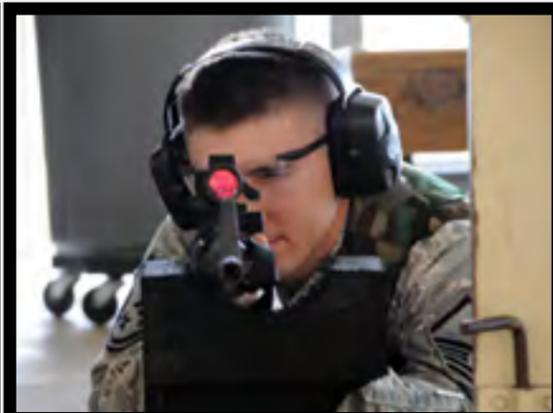
Preparing for a deployment of this nature does not happen

— SEE CES, PAGE 9

RANGE PHOTOS BY TECH. SGT. KENT KAGARISE



Master Sgt. Denver Long, noncommissioned officer in charge of the 442nd Civil Engineers Structures Shop, reviews his target during M-4 qualification. Sergeant Long is scheduled to deploy in August with approximately 35 CES reservists.



# Sweating it out

Photo and story by Tech. Sgt. Kent Kagarise

With the 442nd Fighter Wing's phase I operational readiness exercise in July and inspection in August, the words wet bulb will be used often, but many Citizen Airmen have never seen this mythological creature or understand its implications.

The wet bulb globe is an instrument that measures how long it takes for sweat to evaporate, as well as the heat index and ambient air temperature. It allows the Airmen of the 442nd Medical Squadron who work out of the 509th Bioenvironmental Office to establish with wing command a heat-sensitive and efficient work schedule.

"We use it for monitoring thermal stress," said 1st Lt. Christopher Fenwick, 442nd bioenvironmental engineer. "In a nut shell the wet bulb is a recommendation to the commander of what the work-rest cycle should be."

The wet bulb temperature is checked every two hours during summer unit training assemblies, but with the demands of the exercises it is currently checked once an hour.

"It's hot enough out there. When Airmen are training at high levels, wearing gear they might not normally wear, the heat can affect them quickly," Lieutenant Fenwick said.

Staff Sgt. Jacob Crawford, 442nd bioenvironmental engineering technician, said he remembers when evaporation was measured by monitoring a wet wick in order to track how long it took for the heat to dry it. He said he is impressed with the wet bulb, a newer electronic device.

"It helps us give an accurate wet bulb, which can be lower than the heat index," Sergeant Crawford said. "A lot of folks get worked up about the heat index, but the wet bulb can be lower than how hot it actually feels."

Senior Airman Angelic Werlein, 442nd bioenvironmental engineering technician, said she is less concerned with what the thermometer says when it comes to wet bulb globe temperature.

"Airmen have to be concerned with how much water is leaving their body," she said, "not how hot it feels or how hot it is."

Wet bulb globe temperature is a major concern of the 442nd FW safety office and is something Tech. Sgt. Dawn Mais of the safety office, who is also a nursing student as a civilian, experienced first-hand on two occasions.

"I fell to heat stroke once when I was taking a very common medication that contained diuretics," she said. "Because the demands of Air Force training are so much harsher, Airmen taking any medication should check with their doctor to confirm what their water intake ought to look like, because they may not be aware of the medication's effect on their body."

In Sergeant Mais' case, she said she was drinking plenty of water but did not realize how many necessary nutrients were leaving her body, which caused her to fall victim to heat exhaustion.

"That same weekend I had a friend who was prone to heat-related injuries, so she drank plenty of water the night before and throughout the day," Sergeant Mais said.

In this situation the Airman, Sergeant Mais' friend, drank too much water and suffered the same symptoms of heat stroke.

"She had a good wingman who notified the first responders she had been drinking lots of water regularly," Sergeant Mais said. "This is a prime example where communication and observation can be a matter of life in death during a summer exercise."

Lieutenant Fenwick warned that heat can be deceiving, and that even though many

Airmen are young and think they can handle it, the wet bulb globe temperature, (how long it takes for sweat to evaporate) can put people on their back before they know what hit them.



## CES, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

overnight, Sergeant Hooton said.

The 442nd CES was notified of the deployment almost a year ago, and since then the unit has been preparing almost daily for not only the deployment, but also the operational readiness inspection in August.

With the ORI next month, the 442nd CES has found itself preparing for two deployments: one actual and one simulated.

"To juggle deploying as many people as we are and also getting people ready for the ORI and the unit compliance inspection down the road," Colonel Davison said, "it's been very challenging and very demanding, especially on Sergeant Hooton and his (air-reserve-technician) team here."

Sergeant Hooton agreed.

"In the past several months," Sergeant Hooton said, "we have simultaneously trained real-world deploying reservists and ORI-simulated deploying reservists. Some of the requirements are the same, but everything we are simulating for the ORI, we are doing for the people going on actual deployments."

Recently, members of the 442nd CES were issued most of their equipment, most of which the unit inventoried and stored for transport.

"There are a lot of gear requirements," Colonel Davison said. "You'd never imagine the amount of equipment you need issued to you for this type of environment."

Colonel Davison said the varied temperature of the deployment site necessitates specialized equipment.

"You have to take cold-weather boots. You have to take hot-weather boots. It takes up a lot of room," he said. "You have personal protective gear; it's just a lot of equipment, especially when you're trying to handle weapons."

All of this equipment serves a purpose due to the unique forward operating locations of the mission.

Sergeant Hooton says he is excited about the deployment.

"An exciting part about this deployment is we are taking some of our brightest and sharpest people. I'm excited to see what we do, because I know we're capable of some pretty awesome stuff," Sergeant Hooton said.

The reservists will be deployed for approximately six months.

## KENNEDY, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

one (communications flight technician.)"

"O.K.," Sergeant Kennedy says, "Since the aircraft departure time is graded, we can't miss that. But we can rush the processing so the maintainers can stay on the ground a few more minutes."

Sergeant Koontz picks up the phone and starts making calls to coordinate the later processing time of the deploying reservists.

Sergeant Kennedy says the maintainers currently have more workload than people, but that the wing assembly area processors can get them through the line quickly.

"The people in the WAA are on their A-game now," he says, "I know they can handle it over there."

10:35 A.M.

Sergeant Kennedy goes to the command post where the crisis action team is set up.

"The commander worked with the conscientious objector, who has now agreed to deploy," Sergeant Kennedy tells Capt. Keith Yersak, CAT member. "Also, the aircraft is still departing at 1430, but we're pushing back the time chalk five needs to be at the WAA. It's now 1230, but Major (Cathy) Roberts already assured me we'd be good."

"O.K.," the captain says with a laugh. "So you're telling me to not freak out when I see yellow and red on my (computer) screen."

"Right," Sergeant Kennedy says confidently. "I know they can handle it over (in the WAA.)"

10:38 A.M.

Sergeant Kennedy returns to his office where Sergeant Koontz is finishing up a phone call.

"Hey, Sergeant Koontz, go take a break," Sergeant Kennedy says. "I can hold down the fort for a few minutes."

Sergeant Koontz says he's been hoping for a break for nearly an hour.

The day before, Sergeant Kennedy says, an inspector injected a scenario that he thought might really shake up the office.

The input didn't worry the wing commander though.

"Friday, the inspector took Sergeant Kennedy out of the fight, thinking the whole thing would fall apart," said Col. Eric Overturf, 442nd Fighter Wing commander. "But that didn't happen, because (Sergeant Koontz) stepped right up. Our logistics people did awesome during this exercise!"

The exercise, Sergeant Kennedy says, is about testing the wing's personal sustainability. The goal is to prepare for deployment.

"It's about making sure we are trained and ready reservists," he says.

10:42 A.M.

Sergeant Kennedy answers two more phone calls. Apparently by pushing back chalk five, chalk six will have to process simultaneously.

"We can get chalk six out in less than 20 minutes, so it should be fine," he assures the caller.

After hanging up, Sergeant Kennedy smiles and begins to tell the history of why they call it a "chalk."

"During World War II, they used to use a piece of chalk to write on their helmets which order the soldiers would get off the buses, so they started saying, 'chalk one, chalk two, chalk three,'" he says.

10:53 A.M.

The giant voice announces a transition back to Base-X. In real-world deployments, his job continues even after the reservists have deployed.

All deployed actions cease for the exercise – reservists are now simulating being in their deployed location for the next few hours.

"Today's nothing compared to yesterday though," he says.

"What you see today – is a light day for us. Yesterday people were calling asking about things that would be happening today, but I couldn't even think about that then – every place I've ever lived though, today has come before tomorrow," he says with a smile.

HEAT CATEGORY	WET-BULB INDEX	LIGHT W/R*	MODERATE W/R*	HEAVY W/R*
1	78-81.9° F	No limit	No limit	40/20 min
2	82-84.9° F	No limit	50/10 min	30/30 min
3	85-87.9° F	No limit	40/20 min	30/30 min
4	88-89.9° F	No limit	30/30 min	20/40 min
5	> 90° F	50/10 min	20/40 min	10/50 min

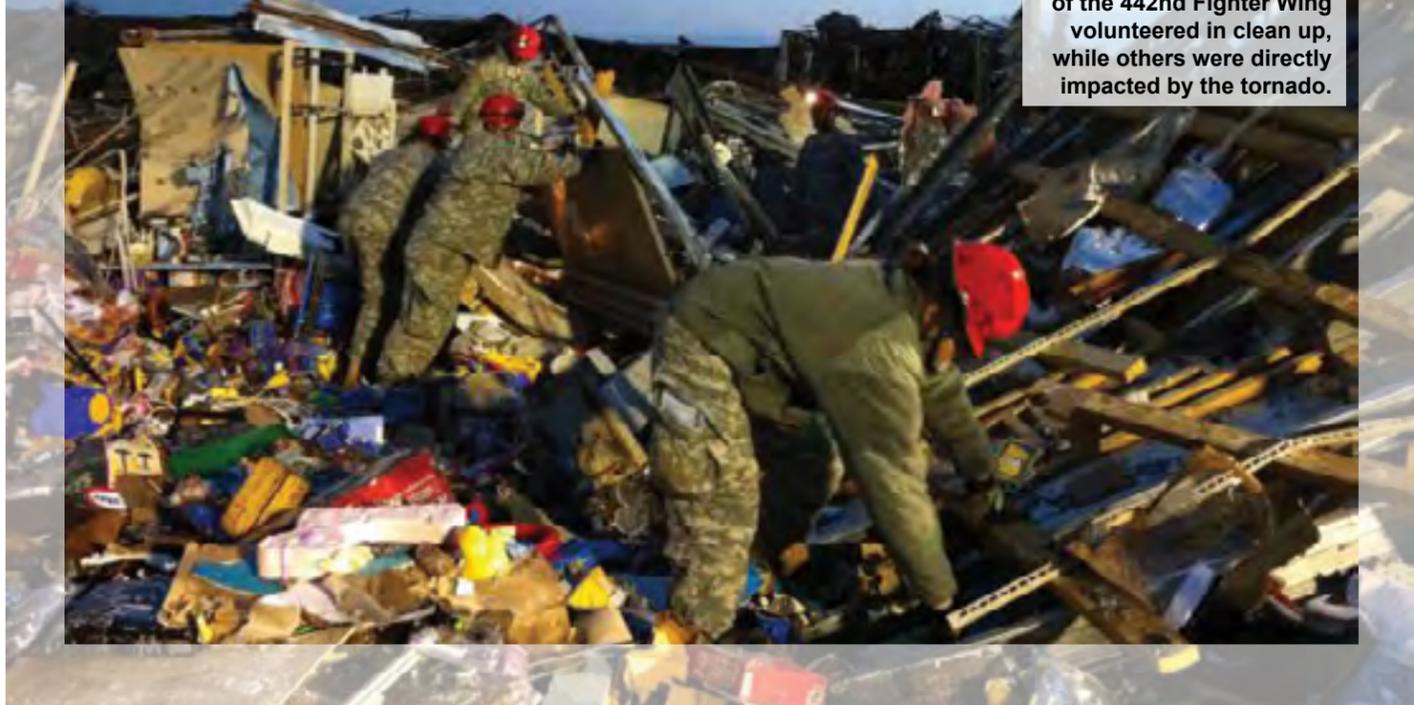
\* Work/Rest schedule

# Gone in 45 seconds

MAY 22, 2011, JOPLIN, MO.

U.S. ARMY PHOTO | RELIEF

Soldiers from the 117th Engineer Team, Missouri Army National Guard task force, work a search-and-rescue related mission just hours after the deadly tornado passed through Joplin, Mo. May 22. Some members of the 442nd Fighter Wing volunteered in clean up, while others were directly impacted by the tornado.



By Tech. Sgt. Kent Kagarise

On May 22, Staff Sgt. Derik Campbell, 442nd Security Forces Squadron, intently stared at the TV in his northern Joplin, Mo. home, when the news coverage displayed a funnel cloud tearing through the heart of his town.

With transformers exploding and lightning flashing on the horizon Sergeant Campbell and his family ran to a neighbor's house where they huddled in the basement and listened to a radio that could not begin to describe nature's wrath just a few miles away.

"When we came up from the basement," Sergeant Campbell said, "we knew that the (local building-surplus) store was gone, but we had no clue just how much damage there was at that time."

Sergeant Campbell works for the Missouri Department of Transportation and knew regardless how little or severe the damage – there would be debris to clear from the roads. His first impression on

how devastating the tornado might have been was when he saw a law enforcement vehicle in the middle of the road awkwardly facing the wrong direction with its toggle lights on.

"When I got closer to the police car, I saw the windows were all broken out, and I didn't see the officer," he said. "Further down the road I came upon six tractor-trailers laying on their sides."

Once Sergeant Campbell arrived at his MoDOT facility, supervisors decided the employees' main priority would be to clear the roads in order to allow rescue and aid workers passage through the ravaged city.

"We worked continuously from 9 p.m. to 9 a.m. removing tree limbs and just about everything else you can imagine to make the roads passable again," he said. "With the electricity being out, we really couldn't see much, (until the sun came up) except for what was in front of us."

Master Sgt. Amber Ross, 442nd Fighter Wing equal opportunity specialist, was traveling through Joplin several hours

after the tornado touched down.

"My family was on our way back from vacation in Arkansas," Sergeant Ross said. "There was an eerie calm among the people as they were searching through the wreckage."

Sergeant Ross said what was most memorable were the glowing little lights of cell phones placed randomly throughout the darkness that lingered as people struggled to connect with loved ones. It was those cell phones that served as beacons for her to give the few supplies she had.

"I had children with me, so I grabbed the cooler and we passed out juice pouches and snacks," Sergeant Ross said. "It wasn't much – but we did our best."

It was clear, Sergeant Ross said, the community was in disarray, and they did not need tourists getting in the way. She decided it would be best for her family to continue traveling through the rainy night.

When the sun finally rose, it found Sergeant Campbell sitting on a hill that he said normally had a limited view – but on

this morning the view was very different. St. John's Regional Medical Center, which usually wasn't visible from this vantage point, was the most prominent figure.

"I could see all around – because everything was gone," he said.

Tech. Sgt. Daniel Landi, 442nd Security Forces Squadron fire team leader, is a Missouri Highway patrolman. As a state trooper, Sergeant Landi assisted Joplin's police department with security and traffic control in the aftermath of the storm that would soon dominate national news sources.

"When I got there, the roads were amazingly clear, but the power was still out so unfortunately security was still an issue because there are people in the world who will take advantage of folks who lost everything," Sergeant Landi said.

Sergeant Campbell has been to Iraq and struggled to find words that could describe the damage that laid before his eyes as he stared at the town that so many family and friends called home.

"Everything was gone — trees, houses

— just everything," Sergeant Campbell said. "It was three times worse than anything I saw in the combat zone."

Sergeant Landi said the tornado-ravaged area reminded him of photographs of Hiroshima and Nagasaki where only remnants of the previous living conditions remained.

"What struck me as incredible were the signs that were still intact," he said. "I saw a disabled parking sign that was twisted from top to bottom like a corkscrew."

Sergeant Campbell said Joplin's residents were sifting through wreckage in an attempt to salvage what they could from their homes.

"The tornado took 45 seconds to wipe out what people had spent their lives building, and then it moved on leaving their belongings in the front yard," he said.

Since 9/11, Sergeant Landi said, he hadn't seen so many American flags flying to show patriotism in the midst of tragedy.

"If a structure was left standing, it had a flag hanging in front of it," he said. "In some cases we'd see what was left of a

house, and on top of the debris there'd be a flag that someone stuck. No place was a bad place for a flag,"

Sergeant Campbell said he struggled with survivor's remorse when he cleaned up his lawn by picking up a few small branches and leaves knowing that on the other side of town there were life-long friends who had lost everything.

"Our house has become a revolving door for friends seeking shelter or just needing a break," he said. "A friend from Kansas City, (Mo.) stayed with us while he helped relocate his mother – who had lost everything."

While Sergeant Landi was in Joplin, he and a fellow state trooper passed through the Campbell's revolving door and enjoyed a warm meal and some solitude away from the turmoil a few short miles away.

"It was nice to feel the arms of the 442nd reaching all the way to Joplin," Sergeant Landi said. "The folks of Joplin are strong people, and I have no doubt they'll bounce back from this and be better than ever."

## BAX, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

Air Force, the recently discharged veteran graduated in 1992 and returned to Jefferson City. Spending almost two years working part-time jobs, he was hired by Von Hoffman Press, Inc. in 1994.

Although he said he enjoyed his new full-time civilian employment position, he began to miss the indescribable camaraderie and esprit de corps that is an entrenched and well-known element of the military lifestyle.

"There's a feeling of being part of something that's greater than yourself that you don't lose once you leave the service," Sergeant Bax said.

In 1996, he enlisted in the Air Force Reserve and was assigned to the 442nd Maintenance Squadron at Whiteman AFB, Mo. With his new unit and reserve assignment, he soon found the opportunity to travel that he had sought upon his first enlistment.

Between 1998 and 2002, the reservist deployed several times in two-week cycles to both Kuwait and Turkey as part of Operation Southern Watch and Operation Northern Watch.

Then, in 2003, he was deployed to Iraq for three months and spent time at Talil AB and Kirkuk AB serving as a munitions systems specialist.

"It was a combat mission because we flew into Talil with all of the lights out on the aircraft," Sergeant Bax said. "They didn't even shut down the aircraft when we landed; they just dropped the back gate so that we could exit."

While in Iraq, he and his fellow servicemembers built and installed all of the munitions that were to be used on the A-10 Thunderbolt II (Warthog) aircraft.

"When he arrived there (in Iraq)," Sergeant Bax said, "we had to build up an area to receive all of the munitions coming in and to assemble the bombs. We ended up using an old bombed-out aircraft shelter for our munitions housing."

Returning stateside in June 2003, the reservist remained on orders

at Whiteman AFB until March 2004, where he continued to train on the installation and construction of munitions.

After his release from active duty, Bax returned to work at what is now RR Donnelley and continued in his civilian employment pursuits for almost two years. However, his break from deployment ended when, in 2006, he was again mobilized for service – this time in Afghanistan.

Spending 35 days in country, the brief deployment was memorable for the now-experienced veteran, he said, since two of his nieces were attached to the unit with which he deployed.

He again returned to RR Donnelley and continued his employment as a shift manager in the bindery department until he received notice of his most recent deployment in 2008 — at which time he spent 60 days in Afghanistan.

Married in May 1999, Sergeant Bax said his wife, Sharon, has been very supportive of his military endeavors and that all military spouses "deserve credit for keeping things going at home" during a loved one's absence.

Sergeant Bax said throughout the years, RR Donnelley has also gone "above and beyond" to ensure that their employees who have served or are currently serving realize just how much their sacrifices are appreciated.

"The company has sent care packages to us while we were deployed and recently hosted a luncheon for every veteran working in the building," Sergeant Bax said. "This really lets us know that our service is truly valued."

With a bit of advice certainly born from years of experience, the veteran added, "More young people should at least consider serving in the reserve."

"I know the military isn't for everyone," he said, "but once they give it a chance they will find that it is a good and honorable profession."

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
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PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. DANIELLE WOLF | INSPECTION

Airman 1st Class Diana Ibarra, 442nd Force Support Squadron, inspects bags during the phase-one operational readiness exercise, June 3.



THE 442ND FIGHTER WING IS AN AIR FORCE RESERVE UNIT AT WHITEMAN AFB, Mo.

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