

PENNSYLVANIA AIR NATIONAL GUARD Vol. 9, No.1 June/July 2009 Pittsburgh, PA

## Air Force runners first to cross finish-line of the 2009 Dick's Sporting Goods Pittsburgh Marathon

by Lt. Col. Don Accamando, 171st Public Affairs

Baghdad, Iraq – As more than 10,000 runners were crossing the finish-line of the 2009 Dick's Sporting Goods Pittsburgh Marathon on May 3, deployed members of the 171st Air Refueling Wing Security Forces Squadron manned positions at Sather Air Base, Iraq.

One week earlier however, nearly 100 deployed unit members were joined by other Airmen, stationed at Sather, Air Base to become the first to compete in the Pittsburgh event in Iraq!

At 5:30 a.m. on April 25, Lt. Col. Steven Painter, commander of the 447th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron, gave the start command and the airmen were off. Included in the group was Cincinnati, Ohio native, Master Sgt. George Neville. Stationed at Robbins Air Force Base, GA, Neville set off on his solo effort to complete the 26.2 mile Pittsburgh Marathon in the pre-dawn Baghdad heat. "This event connected us to our families and friends supporting us throughout our deployment, it was an honor for me to be able to start and later run the course alongside such patriots of freedom," Painter said.

Deployed service members normally forfeit their chance to participate in stateside events when they deploy, but the Pittsburgh Marathon in Iraq would be different. The idea was hatched by 171st Security Forces member and Penn Hills police officer, Master Sgt. Dutch Perz. "When I heard I would be deployed over the marathon timeframe I had to see if there was something I could do to run it while I was away," said Perz. "I called Patrice Matamoros, the marathon director, who didn't hesitate, stating it would be an honor." Perz said. In the months leading up to the run, marathon organizers would ship all the necessary material needed for these Airmen in Iraq to experience a rare piece of Pittsburgh from their deployed home.



Master Sgt. Dutch Perz, Theresa Grogan, Robi Powers and Technical Sgt. Jeremy Cameron pose beside the official "Spirit of Pittsburgh Marathon" banner at Sather Air Base.

"When Dutch presented his idea my immediate thought was yes," said Matamoros. "I asked him what we could do to make this work." Matamoros said. With the support of the Marathon organizers secured, Master Sgt. Perz contacted the 171st Public Affairs office to work the military angle, and the idea quickly began to take shape.

In an effort to give the Iraq event a "Pittsburgh feel" race organizers assembled the identical packages stateside runners received. The deployed runners received official race shirts, bib numbers and medals, but the support didn't stop there. Marathon organizers even invited family members to participate in a "Family and Friends" event at the Runners Expo the day before the Marathon. Participants were treated to a video presentation and given their own special "Family Member Marathon Medal." "We wanted to make the event special for the families of those deployed as well," said Dee Stathsis, Logistical director for the Marathon Association. "This day was just as much about the families as it was about the men and women running in Iraq!"

Please see "Marathon" page 8

# We have friends in Pennsylvania

by Brig. Gen. Roy Uptegraff, Wing Commander

# Commander's CORNER



Last month we travelled to Erie, Pa for the annual Pennsylvania National Guard Association and Leadership conference. This is always a great opportunity to associate with our colleagues across the commonwealth and learn about the issues, opportunities and future for the Pennsylvania Army and Air National Guard. Major General Sischo asked me to prepare a 30 minute presentation outlining the activities, events and successes of the 171st. I took this opportunity to look a little deeper into what we do to support our Pennsylvania Guardsmen. The short answer is – Lots. I was delighted to report that to date; we have transported more than 1,600 Pennsylvania soldiers and airmen around the world. We have transported our Army Guardsmen to Guam, Germany and destinations around the United States. We've flown more than 115 sorties, logging over 300 hours at a cost of approximately \$3.4 million to ensure the Pennsylvania Guard is where it needs to be. Whether it is airlift for the Adjutant General, ORI support for the 193rd Special Operations Wing, a media/education flight for our partners at the 111th Tactical Air Wing, or a mission to Alaska to support the 112th Air Operations Squadron at State College, we do our level best to ensure their success. On the ground, we are known at State Headquarters for the intelligence briefings we routinely provide the staff. Our Medical Group plays a key role in the State's Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, Explosive, and Emergency Response Force Package (CERFP). They continue to participate in hazardous material and emergency response exercises around the commonwealth. Finally, our Honor Guard, Officers, NCOs and Airmen, attend state functions, ceremonies and presentations like many of our peers around the commonwealth. All this activity has led to a significant partnership with the local and at large communities. The result of this is overwhelming support from the local community and a reassurance that when they need the National Guard, we will be there. This adds value to our Wing and promotes a greater awareness of what all of us in Pennsylvania can do to help each other. It is a terrific advantage to be in the 3rd largest National Guard state with one of the Air Guards' largest KC-135 Wings. Our Pennsylvania National Guard Association Conference is more than a meeting, it is a group of old and new friends coming together to ensure joint success of our State mission with all the resources we can provide.

The Operations Group has a variety of unit memorabilia items for sale.

Hats - \$16

Polo Shirts - \$23

T-Shirts - \$15

Steel Patches - 1 for \$3

or 2 for \$5

Golf Windbreakers - \$30

Fleece Pullovers - \$30

Contact any lieutenant in Operations for purchases.

## Look for Public Affairs Tanker Times survey in the future

Please watch for details in the future regarding the method of receiving the Tanker Times. The Tanker Times is now available via the public web, at [www.171arw.ang.af.mil](http://www.171arw.ang.af.mil).

In an effort to reduce costs we will be asking fulltime unit members if they would still like to receive a hard copy of this publication.



As of May 1, the gortex BDU jacket is no longer authorized to be worn with the ABU uniform.

### "Editorial Staff"



Brigadier General Roy E. Uptegraff, III Commander

171st Air Refueling Wing Public Affairs Office: Lt. Col. Donald Accamando

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## Hometown heroes program recognizes deployers

by Command Chief Master Sgt. Vic Guerra

Memorial Day has just passed. This is a day we traditionally recognize and honor, in various ways with parades, speeches, decoration of graves, etc., our Nation's military personnel who have fallen during time of war. I hope each of us took the time to reflect upon and honor our fallen comrades. But today I want to talk about the recognition of another group, our Hometown Heroes.

The Air National Guard has developed a program to recognize and honor our Airmen for their service to our Nation. This program is called Hometown Heroes Salute (HHS). The HHS program was announced to senior leaders last fall.

The HHS program will first recognize Airmen who have deployed away from home station for more than 30 consecutive days in support of contingency operations such as Operations Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom and Noble Eagle, as well as all other contingency operations since 9/11. That's a lot of "catching up" that needs to be done, and our unit has been working on doing just that for the past several months identifying our Airmen that meet that criteria. It's a big undertaking. Guard wide, that could be more than 70,000 Air Guard members.

The initial recognition award is a cherry wood-encased Letter of Appreciation signed by the Director of the Air National Guard and the Air National Guard Command Chief, enclosed with a commemorative coin. Once the initial "catch up" is completed, the complete three-tiered HHS program will start in 2010. The complete three-tiered HHS program includes the initial award I just described which will be given to Airmen deployed in support of a contingency operation for more than 30 and up to 179 days. Those deploying from 180 to 365 days will receive a framed American flag, and those deploying for more than 365 days will receive an eagle statuette. I have seen these awards and they are top quality and very nice. It's possible for an Airman to earn all three awards, but they cannot receive any one award more than once.

We all know that we could not do our mission without the support of those at home. The HHS program developers recognized this and have included recognition awards for families, friends and/or employers as well. Spouses will receive a commemorative Hometown Heroes Salute engraved pen and pencil set. Children will receive a set of commemorative dog tags. Airmen can also decide on a "Center of Influence" and present that person or organization with a special commemorative medallion of appreciation. This "Center of Influence" award can be given to a family member, an employer, someone in the community – anyone of the Airman's choosing.

Additional information on the HHS program, along with photos of the various recognition awards, can be found at <https://airguard.ang.af.mil/hometownheroessalute>. Sorry to those of you at home, but currently this site is only accessible from a military computer. The HHS program is about recognizing and thanking Airmen and their families for their service and support – our Hometown Heroes.



## Briefs FYI

### Golf Season Arrives

Maintenance Golf Outing  
Friday, Sept. 4, 2009  
Fort Cherry Golf Course  
Contact Paul Palko 412-776-7391

Stan Eval Golf Outing  
Monday, July 13, 2009  
Blackhawk Golf Course  
Contact Rich Johnson 412-653-4083,  
[johnsonra1@comcast.net](mailto:johnsonra1@comcast.net)

POL Golf Outing  
Sunday, August 9, 2009  
Copeland Hills Golf Course  
Contact Jeff Favorite 412-776-7385

Western States Open  
Air National Guard Golf Outing  
Sept. 9 - 11, 2009  
Contact Rich Johnson 412-653-4083,  
[johnsonra1@comcast.net](mailto:johnsonra1@comcast.net)

Estimated pay date for the  
June UTA:  
15 June  
Estimated pay date for the  
June SUTA:  
24 June

In 2008 new laws were passed to extend and broaden veteran's benefits for anyone who served in a combat zone. This also applies to current Guard and Reserve personnel who have deployed in support of the Global War on Terror. Please contact the OEF/OIF Program at the VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System to determine your eligibility: (412) 954-4186.

## Mark your calendar with Medical Group's Warrior Week

The Medical Group will be conducting a Warrior Week Aug 3-7. Wing personnel will be able to accomplish their annual medical requirements. It has been a challenge trying to get all Wing personnel back on the birth month schedule. If you are past due or currently due and your birth month is over 2 -3 months away, you will be required to come in twice this year. We will also be offering CPR classes and Self Aid & Buddy Care classes; dates for those classes will be forthcoming. If you have any questions or are in need of more information, please contact Medical Group personnel at 412-776-7630 or 412-776-7287.

## Social security numbers removed from DOD ID cards

The Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC) developed an initiative that will remove social security numbers (SSN) from ID cards. These changes are being made to protect the identity information of cardholders. Changes to ID cards will occur when the cardholder's expired card is renewed.

The removal of SSNs will occur in three phases, all of which will occur upon ID card renewal.

Phase One: Removal of Dependent SSNs – this phase has already begun. (Dependent SSN will be replaced with XXX-XX-XXXX) (Sponsor SSN will remain visible.)

Phase Two: Remove printed SSNs from all cards – Will begin by end of calendar year 2009. The following will apply to all Dependent/Retiree cards: Sponsor and cardholder SSN will be replaced with XXX-XX-XXXX. All Geneva Convention Cards will be truncated to the last four digits of the cardholder's SSN.

Phase Three: Remove SSNs embedded in barcodes – this will begin during calendar year 2012.

If you are a retiree with an indefinite expiration date and wish to replace your card with one that does not have an SSN, the earliest you may do so is January 2010.

As a reminder, please ensure you bring two valid forms of identification when visiting the Personnel Office for an ID card. Acceptable forms of identification are: military ID, US driver's license, federal-state-local agency photo ID, Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) Forms, foreign ID, US passport, foreign passport, Canadian driver's license, Canadian ID, birth certificate, social security card, voter registration card and school ID with photo. All documents MUST be original. No photo copies will be accepted. Please contact the Military ID card section at 412-776-7485 if you have a question, or to make an appointment.

## Course offers refresher on hazardous material operations

*By Airman 1st Class Maggie Ewing*

Members from the Medical Group and Services participated in a Hazmat Operations Class during the week of May 11. Retired Civil Engineering Squadron Master Sgt., John Gardell, instructed the 24 hour long class which began Monday with the classroom portion and ended Thursday with practical stations training.

Training was split into two sections as nine medical personnel geared up first to participate in the practical stations wearing a full body suit, pair of protective gloves, boots and a PAP-R mask, rebreather kit. The 14 Services members followed their lead at the stations as the medical personnel then attended a final briefing.

Gardell, now Project Manager for SUNPRO Environmental and a National Fire Academy Instructor, explained how the practical station's purpose is to train participants in how to mitigate, divert, dam and absorb hazardous material as well as alert them to general precautions for safety.

Maj. Kathryn Boyle informed us that this was not the first time they have used these PAP-R masks, they were worn for last summer's CERF-P exercise in Lancaster, Pa where approximately 40 171st medical individuals participated, some from the 193rd, 111th and some civilians. Maj. Boyle commented, "This class is a very thorough refresher from last summer." Prior to this class she had no experience with Hazmat and Public Response. "It's a good experience to get global perspective from a patient's view," said Boyle.

The same course is taught to civilians though Guard members also get the training due to "go-to-war" requirements and because of their role as back-up for Fire Departments and Security Forces. The class is geared toward any hazardous material incident and any hazardous material released from its container.

Master Sgt. Darryl Ross felt the class was beneficial, "we need to keep ourselves familiarized in order to be proficient, to provide the highest level of support possible and to be prepared...continuous training helps."



*Members of the 171st Medical Group witness the absorption rate of specialized materials for hazardous cleanup. (U. S. Air Force photo/Capt. Dicie Hritz)*

## Dr. Gregory G. Dell’Omo to speak at 171st Consolidated Wing Dining Out



*Gregory G. Dell’Omo, Ph.D., president of Robert Morris University, presides over one of Pennsylvania’s most innovative independent institutions of higher learning. He began his tenure as president on Aug. 1, 2005. In his first three years, he oversaw the construction or renovation of numerous buildings, the addition of five degree programs, and the launch of a new alumni magazine, athletic logo and mascot. By the end of Dell’Omo’s second year, the University had unveiled a refined mission statement, six core values, and a comprehensive five-year strategic plan to guide RMU into the year 2012. In addition, a new 10-year campus master plan was set in motion to guide RMU’s evolution to a more residential campus with a strong living-learning environment. Dell’Omo came to RMU after 14 years at Saint Joseph’s University in Philadelphia, where he served as vice president for external affairs from 2002 to 2005. Dell’Omo holds a bachelor’s degree in economics from Montclair State University, a master’s degree in industrial relations from Rutgers and a Ph.D. in industrial relations/human resource management from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Dell’Omo and his wife, Polly, have three children – Lara, Nicholas and Vincent.*

*Please see page 9 for Dining Out details.*

## Bravo Mission Marks Milestone

*By Lt. Col. Jeff Wallace, Operations*

The 171st Air Refueling Wing, Pennsylvania Air National Guard, achieved a major milestone by reaching the 100th million pounds of fuel offloaded on April 28 in support of the North East Tanker Task Force. Aircraft Commander Capt. Walter Ransom commanded a crew of three that included Co-pilot Capt. Michael Koehl, boom operator Staff Sgt. William Paull and crew chief, Tech. Sgt. Dan Oyster onboard “Ethyl 06,” the call sign assigned to a KC-135R aircraft stationed at Pittsburgh International Airport that morning.

“Ethyl 06” offloaded 80,000 pounds of jet fuel to a C-17 aircraft bound overseas. The aerial refueling took place off the coast of Maine and New Foundland , continuing a practice performed daily by the citizen airmen of the Pennsylvania Air National Guard.

One hundred million pounds of JP8 jet fuel is the equivalent of nearly 15 million gallons of fuel. To put this amount of fuel in perspective; 15 million

gallons would fill approximately 454 full size swimming pools, and would power the average American car for more than 22,400 years (assuming 22.4 MPG and 15000 miles/yr).

The North East Tanker Task Force supports Operation Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom by aerial refueling cargo aircraft bound for and from Iraq and Afghanistan. The refueling acts as a force multiplier by allowing cargo aircraft to fly farther and carry more cargo than they would otherwise be capable of.

The 171st Air Refueling Wing is a Pennsylvania Air National Guard unit that has been actively engaged in support of United States contingencies worldwide. Since 9/11, the 171st has maintained numerous around-the-clock alert lines able to respond at a moment’s notice for Homeland Defense, the North East Tanker Task Force, and other taskings as directed by the Governor of Pennsylvania and Federal Command Authorities.



*Crew members of the historic flight on April 28 are pictured L-R: Capt. Walter Ransom, Tech. Sgt. Bill Paull, Capt. Michael Koehl and Tech. Sgt. Dan Oyster.*

## Young people shine on 7th annual JR ROTC Day

by Capt. Dicie Hritz, 171st Public Affairs

Approximately 265 cadets from JR ROTC programs all around the local area were at the 171st Air Refueling Wing on April 16 for the 7th Annual JR ROTC Day.

Two separate groups divided the massive crowd, a flying group and a ground activities group. Juniors and seniors were given the opportunity to experience an orientation flight on a KC-135 aircraft during a refueling mission while the freshman and sophomore cadets enjoyed ground activities. Col. Dave MacMillan gave a welcome brief to the flying group, while Brig. Gen. Roy Uptegraff, 171st Wing Commander gave a welcome brief to the ground activities group.

The flying group started their day off with a 7:30 a.m. show-time in the operations briefing room. They sat through a

safety briefing and then proceeded through security screening and then were off for a four-hour flight on a refueling mission.

Opening Ceremonies for the ground activities group commenced at 9:15 a.m. and were followed by the Recruiter's challenge events which included: Cadet Color Guard challenge, Relay challenge, Chem Defense Dress Out challenge, and a Push-up challenge.

"The JR ROTC Day is an excellent opportunity to bring out the JR ROTC programs from all the different branches to show what the Air National Guard has to offer," said Senior Airman Lindsey Duncan, 171st recruiter. "JR ROTC Day creates awareness while having fun doing it."

"The competition with the other JR ROTC programs is high," said Master Sgt.

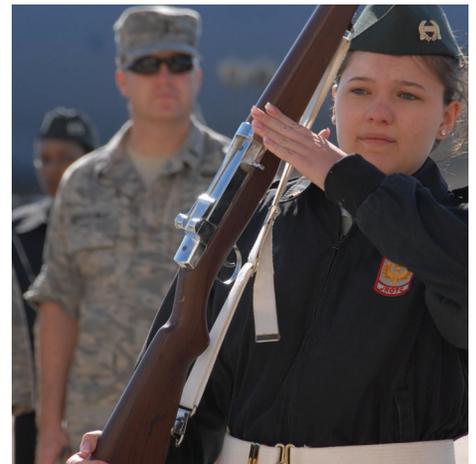
Sue Smith, 171st Recruiting Supervisor. "The Recruiter's challenge is the best part, it's a blast watching the cadets compete like they do," said Smith.

"My time at the 171st Air Refueling Wing was one of the most fun times I have had in JROTC this year. My favorite part of the day was getting to see all my friends from their high schools and meeting new friends. Some of the people I met out there were great people. The other thing I liked was that we got to see a plane and the Chem gear suit. I like everything out there. I would like to do it again," SFC. Nicholas Tomasovich, Oliver HS JR ROTC.

*When it comes to MOPP Gear, you always need a buddy check! Two Cadets sprint back to the starting line after Staff Sgt. Brandon Sampson and Senior Airman Paul Webster check their Gear and find something wrong. The Cadets must return to the finish line, correct the error, and sprint back to the judges to complete the relay.*



*West Mifflin Instructor, MSgt Dicerbo, helps his team in the Litter Carry Relay. The teams carried one teammate across the relay race while only proceeding to the finish line if they correctly answered a trivia question placed at each cone.*



*This year's Color Guard Competition was the best to date and set the standard high for next year! (U.S. Air Force photos/Master Sgt. Ann Young)*



*Cadets pay close attention as Senior Airman Paul Webster, 171 CES, dresses to MOPP 4. Webster was the only example the Cadets had before trying it themselves in a Chem. Gear Relay Race.*

## Unit members clean up local area outside gate

By Capt. Dicie Hritz, 171st Public Affairs

Members from the 171st Air Refueling Wing cleaned up a local road during the Great Pennsylvania Cleanup on April 17, 2009.

Approximately 75 volunteers from all around the base walked McClaren Road located just outside the front gate to pick up trash and beautify the community.

The cleanup route started at the McClaren Road/Route 60 Interchange and ended at Resurrection Cemetery which spans a two mile stretch of road.

The day started as volunteers gathered in the Steel City Cafe at 7:30 a.m. where members were issued their Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), consisting of gloves and reflective vests.

Lt. Col. John Tower, the 171st Environmental Coordinator said, "The cleanup walk makes the area look better and it creates a safer environment. We picked up many tires and other trash which helps prevent the spread of West Nile disease."

The event was not just a success from an environmental perspective, but it was fun for unit members to get out and take a stroll down McClaren Road on a beautiful, brisk morning. "It was great to see everyone out there. I would do it again next year," said Tech. Sgt. Deb Snatchko, 171st Comsec Manager and a cleanup walk volunteer.

The Great Pennsylvania Cleanup Day wrapped up with a braut-burn held by the Operations Group to benefit Master Sgt. Randy Proffitt of the 171st Life Support shop who is currently battling prostate cancer.



Above: Lt. Col. Ray Hyland leads a group of Airmen along McClaren road collecting garbage to improve the environment outside the gates of the 171st Air Refueling Wing.



Above: Members of the 171st pick up trash along McClaren Road as part of National Clean-up day.

## State Senators, Representatives and several key staffers teamed with the 171st to highlight its mission in a made for TV program

Master Sgt. Sue Smith, Recruiting Superintendent, highlights the unit's manning and opportunities.



Above: Several unit members were on hand to showcase our unit mission for Senators Pippy and Vogel. Right: Lt. Col. Tom Hess rolled out the red carpet with an aircraft display in Phase, our periodic inspection cycle performed at home station.



State Senators, Representatives and several key staffers teamed with the 171st to highlight its mission in a made for TV program. The production was filmed by the Senate Republican Communications Office, Video Production Team and will be shown sometime later this summer. (U.S. Air Force photos/Master Sgt. Ann Young)

## “Marathon” continued from Page 1

The support didn't stop there though. A former member for the United States Army, Rob Powers, the “Voice of Running,” was on hand to report the event. When Mr. Powers, previously scheduled to be in Kuwait City to cover a remote mini-marathon for Army Guardsmen from Indiana, learned that Pittsburgh would be hosting an event, he volunteered to travel to Iraq and report the Iraq-Pittsburgh story.

Due to the intense heat, increased threat conditions and long shift work, most deployed runners participated in what would be called the “Spirit of the Pittsburgh Marathon,” a short 2.62 mile event on an eighth of a mile track on Sather Air Base. There was even a one mile “Battle Rattle Run,” where adventurous runners donned flak vests and Kevlar helmets.

Three runners did officially complete marathon events. “It doesn't matter if it is 26.2 miles or 2.62 miles, the fact that we can participate in a Pittsburgh event brought a piece of home that much closer to Iraq,” said Sgt. Perz.

Senior Master Sgt. Neville's solo effort to run a full marathon on the certified course and qualify for Boston was a surprise addition to the event. Before 9 a.m., temperatures would climb into the high 80s, and Neville's amazing effort would attract a crowd of multi-national soldiers from across the small but very busy Sather Air Base, where Neville ran repeat laps around a twisty .8 mile loop.

According to Powers, “Neville was on pace to break 3:00, looking fantastic and eating up this ten corner loop.” Powers continues, “At around 15 miles into his effort, the veteran USAF marathoner started to slow as a strong wind came in from the north and dominated over 2/3 of the course forcing a considerable effort, with very little reward in the way of a favorable tail wind.” Ultimately, “word spread throughout the base, and soldiers from the USAF, Army, and British NATO forces could be seen and heard literally chanting for Neville from various locations around the perimeter. Neville rounded the final corner, aimed in on the finish line and literally ran into the Pittsburgh Marathon Banner that had been stretched across the finish line as a victory blanket. Neville was visibly in pain but joy; his goal was to aim high and go sub 3:20, and that's exactly what he did!” Neville finished in 3:19:45, qualifying for the Boston Marathon to be held later this year.

Master Sgt. Perz and Technical Sgt. Jeremy Cameron would both run the Phillips-Respironics Half-Marathon and like Neville were the first official runners posting impressive, 1 hour 53 minute time.

This was a big day in Pittsburgh because it marked the return of the Marathon after a five year hiatus. By the response, it was obvious that many runners were glad to see the event return. But runners in Iraq experienced something

special as well. Because of the thoughtfulness of the Marathon organizers and a simple idea of a deployed runner, American service men and women enjoyed a small piece of home if only for a few hours.



*171st Video Specialist, Staff Sgt. Shawn Monk captures Robi Powers, the “Voice of Running” moments before the start of the Pittsburgh Marathon. Powers traveled to Sather Air Base to cover the Iraq running of the Pittsburgh Marathon. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Sara Bressler)*



*Eric Schwiederowski and wife, Rhea, enjoy a video presentation and shout out featuring their son, Staff Sgt. Adam Schwiederowski currently deployed to Iraq. The event was sponsored by the Marathon Association and held on May 2, the day before the running of the Pittsburgh Marathon. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Sara Bressler)*

*Senior Master Sgt. George Neville is all smiles after posting the first official Pittsburgh Marathon time of 3 hours 19 minutes and 45 seconds. His time helped him qualify for the Boston Marathon to be run later in this year.*



You have just entered the ...

# RECRUITER ZONE

Our Recruiting Team -- (412) 776-7495

Master Sgts. Sue Smith and Skip Powell, Tech. Sgt. John Frazier, Staff Sgts. Lindsey Duncan and Shayla Pollard  
Contact us toll free at 1-877-249-5193 or through the web [www.papitt.ang.af.mil](http://www.papitt.ang.af.mil)



## Congratulations!

Sarah Weaver  
Charles Wiley



David J Prasko  
Jeffrey A Wilt  
Stephen F Huff

Kirk Boring  
Lorin Gardner  
Keith Gilmer  
Ben Hritz  
Rebekkah Jandron



Susan Bobb  
Lindsey Duncan  
Jeffrey Fromlak  
Joshua Glessner  
Joshua Nordeen  
Lori Scott

Charles Zielinske



## Retention Corner

Master Sgt. Don Schauer and Staff Sgt. Elizabeth Simoneau

APPLICATIONS ARE NOW BEING ACCEPTED FOR THE POST 9/11 GI BILL. Apply by going to the GI Bill website at: [www.gibill.va.gov](http://www.gibill.va.gov) You will see a button labeled "Education Benefits," under which there is a selection for "Education Forms." Apply by completing a 22-1990 through VONAPP, the Veteran Administration's online application process. You will be required to attach scanned copies or fax copies of any Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty (DD Form 214) to the VA, showing at least 90 consecutive days of Title 10 Active Duty in support of a contingency operation such as Operation Noble Eagle, or Operation Enduring Freedom. Additional active duty periods of less than 90 days can give you increased benefit amounts, but you must have at least 90 consecutive days.

Procedures and final guidance for transferring benefits to dependants under the Post 9/11 GI Bill have not been finalized. If you plan to transfer your benefits, the first step will be applying for eligibility for the military member, so apply now. The GI Bill website is the only reliable source of information for Post 9/11 benefits.

## Welcome new 171st members

Martin L. Feroce  
Rachel E. Hough  
Daniel M. Hoffer  
Denise R. Martin  
David E. Kepple  
Kristopher R. Minnich  
Christopher R. Biddle  
Nicholas J. Warren  
Craig A. Carter  
Ethan J. Winter  
Jeremy L. Sherbondy  
Rachel L. Wedel  
Chadd F. McElfresh

## Become a Pilot at the 171st!

The 171st is now accepting applications for traditional pilot positions. In addition to their drill periods, candidates must be willing to accomplish up to 48 flying training periods, be available for deployments, alerts, as well as evening flights, pass a flying class III physical, attend the 52-week Undergraduate Pilot Training Program and attend the Basic Water and Land Survival courses, followed by 90 days of home station training.

Interviews are planned for the late August/early September. Applications should be submitted no later than July 31.

If interested, pick up an application from the recruiting office or reach Master Sgt. Sue Smith, 412-776-7495/ [suzanne.smith@ang.af.mil](mailto:suzanne.smith@ang.af.mil). Contact Capt. Jim Moretti, 412-776-7430/ [james.moretti@ang.af.mil](mailto:moretti@ang.af.mil), with any additional questions or concerns you may have.

## Dining Out 2009

**Date:** August 21, 2009  
**Time:** 6 p.m. to 11:30 p.m.  
**Location:** Hyatt Regency Pittsburgh Airport  
**Guest Speaker:** Gregory Dell'Omo, Robert Morris University President  
**Military:** Mess Dress or Semiformal  
**Civilian and Retiree:** Semiformal  
**Menu:** Arugula Salad, Duo Platter of Pan Seared Chicken Breast and Strip Loin of Beef, Chef's Selection of Vegetable and Potatoes, Rolls, Coffee/Tea, Dessert Trio  
Vegetarian Meal upon request  
**Parking:** free - get ticket night of the Dining Out at Guest's sign-in table  
**Rooms:** available under the Air National Guard for \$100 plus tax, call 724-899-1234  
**Tickets:** \$38/person from Master Sgts. Monica Heyl (7364), Julie McBane (7402), Kim Rose (7400)

**HIGH**  
Flyer

Aircraft: 59-1467  
Hours Flown: 59.6  
Sorties Flown: 12

Crew chiefs: Pat Gallagher, Dave Skrtich, Michelle Campbell, Dustin Mara, Allen Augustine, and Nate Lieberum

READY TO ROCK

**Retiree Office**  
**300 Tanker Road #4210,**  
**Coraopolis, PA 15108-4210**  
**(412) 776-7587**  
**FAX: (412) 776-7441**  
**ray.long@ang.af.mil**

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY!**

To those of you celebrating this event during the month of June or July and belated greetings to those of you we missed in the previous months.

**IN SYMPATHY**

We extend our sympathies to the family of Retired Master Sergeant Elmer W. Volkman, Jr. Elmer died Apr 24, 2009 He was 79 years old. He served tours in Vietnam and Korea. Elmer retired from the 171st in 1980.

**RECENT RETIREMENTS**

The following personnel recently retired in April and May : Master Sergeants Jeffrey Lapping, Richard Harris and Patrick Mostyn, and Staff Sergeant Leeann Platt. Congratulations! If we may be of any assistance please contact us.

**DON'T BE A STRANGER!**

Stop by and visit some Thursday. We learn new things from your visits and maybe we can help resolve a problem you may have. Looking forward to seeing you!

**BRUNCH** The next brunch will be Monday, July 20, 2009. Please bring your spouses and friends.

**New way exists to access 171st Finance Customer Service - even from home**

<https://wwwd.my.af.mil/afknprod/ASPs/CoP/OpenCoP.asp?Filter=AN-FM-XF-18>

The Finance Management (FM) Office would like to introduce the 171 ARW Financial Management/ANG, Pittsburgh, PA Community of Practice (CoP). Since our FM information on the Steel Web can only be accessed from on-base computers, we established an FM CoP which allows us to provide Customer Service to all unit members 24/7. This will allow FM to better serve all unit members, whether you are deployed, working at the 171st or at your residence. Our CoP can be accessed via your AF Portal account on any computer using your USER ID and password, or your CAC card. You will need to request to become a member when you first open the CoP, which is located at the top left corner, "+ Become a Member."

The left and right margin of the CoP home page contains various quick links. The center of the page provides you our customer service hours and estimated pay dates. The "CUSTOMER SERVICE" folder is located under "Document Management." This will take you to several folders that contain documents and/or links to assist you. Our CoP is new, so documents/links will continue to be added on a regular basis. Below are some of the folders under customer service with a brief description of their contents.

**AROWS** – Instructions on how a member can retrieve their individual orders in AROWS. More information is coming in this folder to assist order clerks, approving officials and certifying officials.

**Citibank Travel Card** – GTC application, Statement of Understanding, Commanders GTC Policy, with more to follow

**Civilian Pay** – Pay charts & Timekeeper information to include forms, regulations, training, with more to follow

**DTS** – Various instructions to assist users, approving officials and certifying officials

**FM Newsletters** – finance changes, updates and helpful information

**FM Pamphlets/Instructions** – various pamphlets to assist you on entitlements, systems access, etc

**Military Pay** – Pay charts, UTA calendar, UTA pay dates, guides, etc

**Travel Pay** – Travel voucher checklist, samples, blank forms, guides, etc

Congratulations to the new Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force

Chief Master Sergeant James A. Roy has been selected as the 16th Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force.

On 30 June 2009, Chief Roy will become the new representative for the enlisted corps and the personal adviser to Air Force senior leadership on all issues regarding the welfare, readiness, morale, and proper utilization and progress of our great enlisted force. Chief Roy comes to the highest enlisted position of the Air Force from Camp H.M. Smith, Hawaii, where he is the Senior Enlisted Advisor to the U.S. Pacific Command Combatant Commander and staff.

The Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force serves a vital role on the Air Staff as the voice of the enlisted force. CMSAF leadership connects senior Air Force leaders with Airmen around the world and promotes a thorough understanding of the challenges Airmen face every day.

## Get answers to your questions on veteran's benefits

**Veterans Benefits** – In the never ending desire to aid veterans, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is offering a multitude of services for returning Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) veterans. The following highlights the benefits offered and where to find more information on these services.

**Health Care Eligibility for 5 years** — Enroll for health care at any VA Medical Center or clinic for 5 years following your military separation date. When you enroll, you may start receiving your health care at the VA right away, or not - the choice is yours! Once you enroll, the VA will be available to help serve your health care needs for years to come - but you must enroll within 5 years from separation!

**Dental Benefits** — VA provides dental examinations and benefits to veterans with service related dental conditions. You may be eligible for one-time dental care but you must apply for a dental exam within the first 180 days of your separation date. Visit the Office of Dentistry at <http://www.va.gov/dental/infoports.asp> for more information.

**OEF/OIF Programs** — every VA Medical Center has a team ready to welcome OEF/OIF service members and help coordinate their care. Visit <http://www.oefoif.va.gov/How-DoIGetHelp.asp> for more information.

**Federal Recovery Coordination Program** — assists severely wounded, ill or injured recovering service members, veterans, and their families in accessing the care, services, and benefits provided through the various programs in the Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs, other federal agencies, states, as well as the private sector.

**Additional Benefits** — We provide additional, non-health related benefits which may include: financial benefits, home loans, vocational rehabilitation, education, and more. Visit the Veterans Benefits Administration at <http://www.vba.va.gov/VBA/> for more information. Or contact the main office at the phone numbers provided.

### Contact Us

Benefits: 1-800-827-1000

Education & Training: 1-888-442-4551

Life Insurance: 1-800-669-8477

Special Issues: 1-800-749-8387

Health Care: 1-877-222-VETS (8387)

Headstones/Markers: 1-800-697-6947

VA Insp. General: 1-800-488-8244

TDD: 1-800-829-4833

## The Air Force is paying for good IDEAs

The Air Force Innovative Development Through Employee Awareness (IDEA) Program routinely distributes recognition certificates and monetary awards for original ideas that benefit the Air Force. Depending on the validated first year savings and/or intangible benefits, the rewards can range from \$200 to \$10,000.

“We want to see ideas from across the Air Force, from civilians, enlisted and officers, from every career field and every shop, from the cubicles to the cockpits,” said Nathaniel Zabel, chief of the Innovation Programs Branch at the Air Force Manpower Agency.

From 2004 to 2008, almost 35,000 ideas were submitted for evaluation. Nearly 50 percent of those were accepted and received personal incentive awards. This fiscal year, close to \$850,000 has already been awarded for innovative ideas.

“The IDEA Web site has made it extremely easy to submit an idea,” said Master Sgt. Art Hoven, assigned to Offutt AFB, Neb.

“Submitting your idea is a sure fire way to have your voice heard, and possibly have an impact Air Force wide,” agreed Sergeant Hoven. “The Air Force can’t fix something if they don’t know it’s broken.”

As the current IDEA Program heads into its 13th year, AFMA plans to continue integration efforts through partnership with other improvement programs, such as Air Force Smart Operations, Best Practices and Lessons Learned to streamline process improvement from the lowest to the highest levels across the entire Air Force.

“The IDEA Program is a great resource for our Airmen, especially since most people want to improve their work areas and make their job better,” Mr. Zabel said.

To submit an idea, log on to the Air Force Portal and navigate to “Featured Links” on the home page. Expand “Transformation” then click on “IDEA-AF Suggestion Program.” Once there you can submit ideas, see what ideas have been submitted, provide feedback and see how much money your installation has received during the current fiscal year. For more information on the IDEA Program, visit your base IDEA Program office or e-mail [idea@randolph.af.mil](mailto:idea@randolph.af.mil).

*From left to right Tyler Thomas and Ethan Snyder pose with their “Smiley Cookies” after completing a base tour recently with Tyler’s grandfather Chief Master Sgt. Charlie Thomas. (U.S. Air Force photo / 2d Lt. Chris Preffer)*



## “For Alert Force, For Alert Force” ....

*Lt. Col. James P. Brown, 171 Wing Plans and Exercise*

As you are driving along the perimeter road headed toward the transportation building, you hear those ominous words over the Giant Voice speaker. What are you going to do? What is happening? Well, in the next couple of weeks the base will be participating in another unit generation supporting forces and processes in direct response to US Strategic Command. You, both military and civilian, might just hear those words and now you need to know just what to expect.

Back in the day of SAC (aka Strategic Air Command), units practiced aircrew/aircraft generations on a regular basis. An alert force exercise or response was a major event with multiple crews responding, fire trucks hightailing to the flight line and numerous wing leadership vehicles moving

to get a front row seat to event we call a KLAXON. Back then “Safety was Paramount”...well, today is no different. We need to emphasize safety during our fast responses AND recondition the base populace on what they need to do when they hear a KLAXON or alert force exercise.

The bottom line, all individuals who are present during a unit generation and find themselves in the middle of an Alert Force exercise need to get the heck out of the way. Give way to all responding vehicles to include Security Force vehicles, fire trucks, and alert crew vehicles. Other agencies on base need to educate their troops on what is happening especially if their personnel are not directly supporting the exercise. Be especially cautious on our narrow roads which contain numerous curves. And remember, safety is paramount.

*Vehicles respond to emergency incident on the flightline. (U.S. Air Force photo/Master Sgt. Ann Young)*



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**To the family of:**



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- Tickets MUST be purchased in advance. Tickets will not be sold at the park.
- Purchase tickets from Kim Rose, Brad Gilles, Monica Heyl or the Public Affairs office.

